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[The Editor will be pleased to consider manuscripts if accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. He accepts no responsibility, however, for manuscripts submitted to him.]

## Events of the Week.

THE greatest tyranny in the world has fallen. The glorious news of the successful Russian Revolution will send a thrill of joy through democratic Europe, and will make men feel that life is worth living, and that there is a whole world of fresh thought and action to create and enjoy. It is a warning to despots in Berlin—and nearer home—and if its full fruits can be reaped, a self-governed Liberal Europe may arise from the ashes of the mightiest of its kingdoms of darkness. In its present stage, the Russian revolution realizes the best hopes that have been formed for it. It is Parliamentary and Liberal, acting through the Duma and the Zemstvos, with a supporting Socialist element. The home army, judging from the reports, is nearly everywhere in sympathy, while the fighting forces, who have been driven to despair by the incompetence and treachery of the old régime, have clearly responded to the appeals addressed to them. The generals, headed by the Grand Duke Nicholas, have adhered to the Duma, and where they lead their men will follow with enthusiasm. Nominally the dynasty is continued. The weak and reactionary Tsar has abdicated, and the perverted Empress is said to be under guard. Their boy son succeeds him, and his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, a Liberal, who had long broken with the Tsar, becomes Regent. But power has passed from the Romanoffs, and, we hope, will never return. The Socialists, and perhaps the army and navy, may call for a Republic, and much, we imagine, depends on the attitude of M. Miliukoff, the leader of the Cadets and the ablest statesman in Russia. He will probably be for a form of Monarchy, but it must rest on Parliament. It is deeply to be noted that at the hour when Mr. George is devitalizing Parlia-

mentary government it reveals itself as the source of the new life of the Russian people. We hope that the Liberal Party in Parliament and the country will at once act in strongest support of their Russian comrades.

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THE story of the Revolution has still to be told. Our Government admits that it knew of it last Friday, but the facts were carefully concealed, and only on Wednesday night did some of them begin to filter through in channels of gossip. All attempts to prop the fallen tyranny must now be abandoned, for it is clear that the Revolution is in capable hands. Its first action was through the Duma, headed by its President, M. Rodzianko. From it has proceeded a Provisional Government of twelve members, with Prince Lvoff, the President of the Union of Zemstvos, as Prime Minister, and M. Miliukoff as Foreign Secretary. The rest of the membership is divided among Octobrists, Cadets, and one or two Socialists. The earlier stages of the movement followed the usual lines of a street revolution. The workmen struck, the people gathered in the streets of Petrograd in great crowds, the police and soldiers began by firing and were gradually won over, including the famous Preobrajensky Regiment. The winning of the troops was largely accomplished by the direct appeals of the Parliamentary leaders, including M. Rodzianko and M. Miliukoff.

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Thus the whole city was gradually mastered, and the heads of the Ministry captured, including Protopopoff, the chief villain of the piece, and the Tsar ordered by telegram either to submit or go. He has now submitted and gone, but the story of his demission remains to be told. The next step was the conquest of the armies in the field. The message of the Provisional Government to their commanders must have been as tinder to their fire, for the reaction was nowhere more bitterly hated than by the soldiers it betrayed. The earlier communications to the Generals, asking them to appeal to the Tsar to act with the Duma were sympathetically received. There is no decisive intelligence as to the war policy of the new Government. But it may be assumed to be for its full prosecution. M. Miliukoff, the new Foreign Minister, is an ardent pro-war man, and his programme is extremely advanced. But we may be sure that free Russia will fight, not for aggrandisement, but for liberty.

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It should be understood that the Revolution was provoked by the reaction, not by the reformers. It arose from the Tsar's ukase dissolving the Duma and the Council of the Empire. This act was probably the answer to the Duma's course in drafting a Bill placing the control of food in the hands of the municipalities and Zemstvos. Every Russian, of course, knew that the country teemed with unexported grain, and that the shortage was due, not only to lack of transport, but to inefficiency and corruption. The act of the Duma was, therefore, a direct challenge to the Government. Its Bill assumed that the Duma had the power to use its own initiative, and it took away from the bureaucracy a part of its

official functions. The answer was instant and crushing. The Duma and the Council of the Empire were simply blotted out, and the obstinate Nicholas refused all attempts at accommodation. Lord Milner seems at an earlier stage to have made an unsuccessful attempt to bring about the Parliamentary government which at home he and his colleagues belittle, and Sazonoff was suggested as Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary. But the Tsar would not listen. The Duma then refused to dissolve, formed its Provisional Committee, appointed a Commandant of Petrograd, and brilliantly accomplished its work of converting the garrison and destroying the bureaucratic engine and its head. Moscow at once tendered its allegiance, and the reports from other great centres indicate that the country is with the new Government. Why should it not? The Tsar has brought it to the edge of ruin and starvation, and his successors have a century of discontent and education in freedom behind them.

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GENERAL MAUDE has already received the congratulations of the Allies for the capture of Baghdad. The operations by which he secured the city form a series for which he is entitled to all praise. His pursuit of the Turks is evidence of that "will" which the great Moltke regarded as the sole instrument by which the full benefits of a retreat could be reaped. After the fall of Kut the cavalry pressed forward on the heels of the Turks. An attempt to arrest the retreat on the 5th failed. Two days later the cavalry found the enemy strongly posted on the Diala river, an unfordable stream 30 yards wide; and a formidable battle developed. The cavalry were thrown across the Tigris below its junction with the Diala, and this wing drove the Turks to within six miles of Baghdad. Meanwhile, the infantry had crossed the Diala on the 8th, and in spite of a dust-storm drove the Turks back towards the city. The pressure was maintained on both sides of the Tigris. On Saturday evening the forces were in contact; but during the night the Turks fell back, and the city was entered early next morning. The cavalry at once took up the pursuit, and, after a slight resistance, captured Kadhiman, a little over three miles to the north, with 100 prisoners.

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ON Monday and Tuesday the pursuit was continued, and the advanced detachments reached a point thirty miles to the north of the city. The effect of the British successes has been felt at once in Persia, where the Turks have been steadily drawing back. Kermanshah has fallen, and General Baratoff is pressing the retreating enemy towards Khanikin. The road, at this time of the year, can be easy neither for the Russians nor the Turks; but it should be much worse for the enemy, who marches from one opponent but to fall into the arms of another. The Russians, we may be sure, will not spare themselves, and we shall probably soon hear of their junction with the British. General Maude has captured a considerable amount of booty in and near Baghdad. The Turkish small arms factory is in good repair; there is useful machinery in the railway workshops, and five locomotives and some rolling stock. The advantage of such captures is obvious. The guns which Townshend surrendered have been recovered, and two-thirds of the Turkish guns were captured or only saved from capture by the expedient of sinking them. Over 1,100 Turkish casualties were verified at Baghdad, 500 wounded being abandoned, and 300 prisoners taken. The victory seems to have lacked nothing of completeness.

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THE Germans are again falling back in the West, though the meaning of these movements behind their lines

is unknown to us. Last week the enemy stood on the chalk summit which has been called the Bapaume ridge. The British have now occupied part of the ridge, and it is a part which, in the interests of a safe retirement, should have been held. The ridge as an advantage exists no longer. An assault upon Irles, last Saturday, secured not only the village but also the neighboring heights, nearly 300 prisoners, and fifteen machine-guns. As a rearguard action on so short a front, this was a fair, but not a decisive, performance. Four days later, an assault on a front of three and a-half miles secured Loupart Wood and the village of Gréville. This success placed the British on the western flank of Bapaume, and the fall of the town becomes almost an anti-climax. The troops are but a few hundred yards from the outer houses, and the fact that they have penetrated so far is significant. For a cursory study of the map makes it clear that the position of the defensive centres within the salient is now more precarious than ever; and though the enemy has determined upon a drastic readjustment of his line, it is an operation of delicacy and demands the immunity of his flanks. When the fierce and terrible struggles for almost every yard of the Somme area are recalled, it is evident that the enemy's tactics at present only contemplate enough resistance to cover withdrawal.

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YET Hindenburg's secret is no nearer disclosure. He is withdrawing steadily and without much loss. To say that he retires under compulsion is true, but hardly relevant. No one retreats except through some inferiority of numbers, material, *moral*, or position. But a retreat because of inferiority of position, as in the present case, merely postpones the decision. The Germans had this inferiority forced upon them, and it is certain that any other position can be similarly undermined. If we had unlimited time, we could welcome the present situation. But Germany knows, as well as we, that the resources of every Power are wearing thin. When the enemy falls back entirely from the Bapaume ridge to lower land beyond, we shall have the benefit of commanding positions. The German line will be under observation; but if he falls back far enough, the advantage is not of much account. While we have command of the air, the Army has finer eyes than any other position can give, and without it a ridge is of little value. There are reports from France that the Germans are burning bridges, destroying culverts and ammunition dumps, and preparing for a retreat on a great front. This seems a highly improbable proceeding. Bridges and culverts are usually the last things to be destroyed when they have served their purpose in facilitating the withdrawal.

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THE new German line, according to the "Times" military correspondent, will run through St. Quentin and Laon. A retirement to such a line would blunt the salient which at present points sharply to Paris. It would improve the German position, and it would gain time for the submarine campaign to inflict more damage upon our sea transport. But this cannot be the whole of the German plan. It cannot be any more to their mind than to ours to drag on the war for an unlimited period. But if not they must make an attempt to secure a decision. The winter has been hard. Transport is over-burdened and insufficient now for all the German needs. They may be compelled to hold their hand. But whether they strike or not, soon or late, we may regard their operations calmly. And, as for the Allied plans in the West, there is evidence that a subtler and more promising spirit now inspires them. Elsewhere on the Western front the French have several small successes

to their account. Practically all the ground seized by the Germans in Champagne has been recovered, and attempts to counter-attack met with a costly check. A small post south of St. Mihiel has also been taken. The final meaning of the events of the last few weeks is that the war of positions has almost passed away. The war of manœuvres has returned in a modified form and for a time. It is our business to make it permanent.

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THE latest changes in the Somme area extend the limits of retirement from the salient about Monchy almost to the river, west of Péronne. In some respects this is the most striking of the recent changes. Without the key to the readjustment, it seems almost inexplicable that Grévillers, which dominates Bapaume, and the two and a-half miles between Saillisel and Pierre Vaast Wood, which make the position of Péronne immediately precarious, should have been surrendered. Péronne, like Bapaume, is to be abandoned, but the method of retirement seems from a distance so risky that it is inevitable we should imagine a subtler enterprise behind. There are large troop movements on the west, and it is probable that we are witnessing the cautious opening moves of what may suddenly become the critical struggle of the war, developing perhaps as a German advance on the coast.

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THE number of entries and clearances of British merchant shipping during the week ending last Sunday is about 10 per cent. below that of the preceding week, but this was 10 per cent. higher than the first week for which reports were issued. The sinkings of vessels over 1,600 tons amounted to eleven, a much lower figure than that of the two preceding weeks; but since the risks were lower, and there are casualties still to be notified, the rate seems to be fairly constant. The number of ships under 1,600 tons was four, as against eight and six in the preceding weeks. It is of interest to notice the first French return. The number of merchant ships of over 100 tons net which entered French ports amounted to 859. Only one vessel over 1,600 tons, and one under that register, were sunk, except for sixteen fishing vessels. The percentage of sinkings was, therefore, only just over '2, which gives an insight into the security of French sea-traffic. This includes the Channel service, which even the Germans appear to admit as unshakably secure. The serious feature of our own return is the sharp decline in the number of sailings and arrivals. This points to a decline in the number of neutral vessels at sea.

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THE abstention of the official Liberals saved Mr. George's Administration from a defeat on the cotton duties on Wednesday. The Lancashire members, the Irish Party, some of the Labor Party, and some Radicals, none the less, supported the Lancashire amendment, and mustered 125 votes. The debate was damaging to the Government, and Sir John Simon made brilliant play with the flagrant differences in the arguments advanced by Mr. Chamberlain and the Prime Minister. The former took, in effect, an extreme Home Rule position for India, practically arguing that we must concede whatever she might demand in her own interest as she sees it. Home Rule without self-government is a difficult theory to maintain, and this argument led naturally to some effective Irish comments. Ireland is refused Home Rule, and, even if it is conceded to her, it will not include the right allowed to India of fixing her own fiscal policy. Mr. Bonar Law took the more cynical line of admitting that the Government had merely taken its choice between the trouble in India and the trouble in Lancashire—a piece of frankness

which Mr. Dillon repaid with the paraphrase, "Wherever there is most trouble you give in."

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MR. ASQUITH chose to censure the Government's decision, while declining to upset it, on the ground that acute controversy must be avoided in war time. He, too, was avoiding "trouble"—in this case a General Election. He extracted, however, from the Government their adoption of his amendment, to the effect that these Indian duties shall be reconsidered when the relations of the various parts of the Empire come to be reviewed at the close of the war. We fail to see that anything is gained by this formula. The duties are already imposed: the Bombay industry is already preparing for expansion under their cover; a vested interest and a "swadeshi" sentiment will be built up, which will make the imposition of a countervailing excise almost impossible. What will happen will be that while these duties remain, other and larger infringements of Free Trade will be adopted to balance them. By refusing to fight now, the Liberal Party has prepared for itself other and larger surrenders in the future. Mr. George's sentimental appeal for gratitude to India need hardly detain us. What India really asked for as a recognition of her part in the war was not protection for the Bombay mill-owners, but the free enlistment of Indian volunteers, commissions for Indian officers, and further concessions (political, not financial) to the ideal of Home Rule.

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AN interesting article in the "Philadelphia Ledger," which must have been inspired by some one in President Wilson's confidence, adds a curious chapter to the diplomatic history of the war. It states that in the first year of the war Mr. Wilson was promoting the plan of a peace conference, which was to meet without a preliminary definition of terms. Germany was willing, but the Allies were not. America hoped to overcome our reluctance by offering herself to sit in the conference, and this proposal was making progress when the sinking of the "Lusitania" checked it on both sides of the Atlantic. The article goes on to discuss the rôle of America at a future Conference, and suggests that while neutrals will not want to interfere with the purely European settlement, they might sit while general topics—*e.g.*, disarmament and the freedom of the seas are discussed—an "in-and-out" arrangement like that of Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill. This seems to us a good proposal. The rough answer of the "Times" that we mean to exclude America from any Conference, and to impose our own reading of sea-law, may be noted as the climax of arrogance yet reached in this war. If we "impose" our sea-law on Germany, we shall be imposing it also on America and the world at large. We do not believe that this is the view of our Foreign Office, which has conducted this difficult business of sea-law with moderation and firmness.

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THE "poison" trial ended in the conviction of the offenders, followed by heavy sentences. Mrs. Wheeldon was given ten years' imprisonment, a ruthless punishment. The life of the Prime Minister must, of course, be carefully protected, but the offence of the Wheeldons, while it showed wicked perversity of spirit, never came within a hundred miles of success, or even of coherence in plan. The case was influenced by the hard and not too straight riding of the Crown, which employed two spies, one of whom was clearly an *agent provocateur*, and declined to call one of them. This old and evil precedent was rebuked by the "Daily Telegraph," and we are astonished that the Judge failed seriously to condemn it.



## Politics and Affairs.

### THE GOVERNMENT AND THE WAR.

WAR is a study in disillusionment; and our people have already sustained a swift revulsion from their first feeling about their new Government. That impulse was generous and confiding. Every art of journalism was used to prepare the country for a fresh infusion of energy into the conduct of the war; it accepted this advance advertisement; and even those who disliked the web of intrigue from which Mr. George's Administration was woven, were prepared to take its very mixed material for what it was worth. How has this trust been fulfilled? Brief as Mr. George's tenure of office has been, half-a-dozen purposes have been allowed to come athwart the prosecution of the war. The premier trade of England has been attacked without warning or Parliamentary process, and a bitter and dangerous controversy opened between it and the Indian Empire. Protection has been inaugurated not in England's favor, but against her. Mr. Redmond's support of the war has been rewarded by a challenge to the doctrine of Home Rule, through its cardinal point of the unity of Irish nationality, and his party driven into opposition. Parliament, the chief and natural organ of our governing system, has been affronted by the Prime Minister's withdrawal from its councils, and a slight put upon the Civil Service by his interposition of a screen of ambitious amateurs between it and the great administrative departments. Daily a new locust-swarm of officials descends on the land, darkening its simple mind, until the number of its "controllers" threatens to exceed that of the controlled.

The confusion engendered by this rule of Napoleons on office stools threatens a general disorganization of the national energies. The Government bids men serve their country, without finding them places to serve in; "combs out" farm laborers from the land, and "combs" them "in" again; tells farmers to grow and not to grow; and raises a stentorian call for ships, soldiers, and workers, in the same breath. Its effort thus wants perspective, and its tone the firm equableness which quiets and strengthens the fibres of the nation. It ploughs Richmond Park and lets a vast arable domain go derelict for want of tillers. One week its note about the war is a pæan, the next a dirge. It promises to tell the country the truth about the submarine menace, and then enshrouds it more closely than ever. The nation, so willing, so splendid in its essential spirit of self-surrender, is divided, and its industries are so harried that men do not know from one day to another what store of goods and chattels and credit, and what powers of self-direction, will be left them by the bureaucrats who are the new Kings in Israel. Our view of the war becomes less democratic, and therefore less English, because the Government is not truly English or democratic. In mere efficiency it has already fallen so far below the not extravagant level of its predecessor that men may well begin to long for a more intelligent stewardship. Mr. George makes mistakes, as the case of the cotton duties shows, because his plan of government is wrong, and fails to yield him the clearing-house of policy that the Cabinet system provided. The Asquith Government rejected the Indian cotton duties, because it was a Cabinet. The George Government passed them because it is a superman in a hurry, and his Departments contradict and quarrel with each other because he has "scrapped" the habit of common reference and decision. Here the Government's defect is one of machinery. A deeper fault is the spirit in which policies which should be conceived to meet the tragic need of the hour are merely "window-dressed" to suit its whim.

This want of seriousness, of close and able reflection, seems to us to mar the Government's conduct of the diplomacy of the war. Concentration is essential, and yet new and distracting elements continually appear. The Dominions are summoned to a "War Conference," and this again shapes itself into a Committee on Imperial Preference, while the "Times" suggests a further plunge into an Imperial Constitution.

The attending Ministers have no mandate from their Governments or their peoples to touch the Constitution or the tariff; and the Prime Minister must know the anxiety with which our Allies watch any advance to a preferential system. The Government thus begins to drag an increasing load of irrelevancies, at a moment which calls for direct and simple thinking on the problems of the war and the peace. For the conflict develops; it approaches a period of dreadful sacrifice. For what ends? America invited us to define them. Mr. George's speeches offered her every discouragement; but she was not in form repelled. The Allied objects were stated in the Note of January as maximum conditions, and it was possible to discern in them the conception of a Europe in which the Powers could live together on a basis of justice and therefore of amity. But the form was ambiguous, and they were read in Germany, and Austria in the loose terms of Mr. George's rhetoric. Germany had no good reason for the pretence that they aimed at her dismemberment; Austria had more ground for reading into them an Allied design to carve out a new Kingdom of Bohemia. The result was an unhappy one. The Austro-German Alliance was consolidated in the hour when the accession of a young and untried Emperor gave hopes of a new Austrian orientation. The German War Party, who, according to Mr. George, was "squealing" for peace, returned to power, launched the submarine campaign, and the conflict entered on its present stage of ferocity. Our own nobler and more practical aims—the rehabilitation of Belgium and France, the saving of Western Europe for democracy, and the constitution of a new reign of public law—do, indeed, remain. But it would almost be true to say that, since the new Government arrived, their most conspicuous champions are to be found in American rather than in British statesmanship. The two ideas of a war of conquest and a war of liberty overhang and obscure each other; and no definite moral or political choice is made between them.

Now, if the country's advisers cannot think for it, it must begin to think for itself, on pain of being lost in the fog of an interminable war. "Get on with the war," says the public. But the war must fail to "get on," so long as the statesmen set other things in front of it, and mislay or misconceive the only purpose which can redeem its waste and cruelty. The soldiers make an opening, as in Mesopotamia, but the statesmen act as if the war had immobilized their energies. Yet it is clear, as Lord Loreburn well says in his letter to Mr. Backhouse, that our fighting men must be helped, not only by recruits and supplies, but by "our diplomacy." How are they helped? America tenders her offices, and is half rebuffed. The German Moderates make a halting move towards peace, and in place of interrogating them, and inviting them to come out into the open and say whether they have abandoned or qualified their scheme of aggressive policy, they are allowed to go back again. After two and a-half years of a war in which the youth of Europe is perishing, and she risks a downfall such as war brought upon the City States of Greece, the belligerents are more sharply divided from each other than ever. Mr. George's language even suggests that the contest is more animal than spiritual, and therefore that the reconciling forces in humanity can have no power to stay it. We hope and believe otherwise, for the war was unselfishly and finely begun; but we may well wish to see a more prudent and resourceful spirit in our present direction of it.

### THE WAY TO RESTORE PARLIAMENT.

It is common ground to all thoughtful spectators that our Constitution is in a condition of incoherence and transition. The present chaos is intolerable. We shall perforce evolve from it something more organic, with a basis of popular control. A Directory which supersedes the Cabinet, and from which all the principal Secretaries of State are omitted, will assuredly not last. Our menagerie of bureaucratic "controllers" and dic-



tators, at open war with each other, and standing in no defined relation of responsibility to Parliament, is, we imagine, a transient war-time phenomenon. This incoherent governmental staff will continue its illogical evolution, even while war lasts. Already the "Morning Post" is calling for a Deputy Premier to co-ordinate these centrifugal departments. The forcing of the Imperial issue will only complicate the problem. For our part, we are content to watch these transitory experiments with some curiosity, but without undue concern. Whether we shall ever return exactly to the old Cabinet system may be doubtful, but we do not believe in the permanence of the new Directory. The absorbing interest of the new phase is for us the discovery of the machinery by which it will seek contact with the democracy. It works to-day through mass impulse and suggestion, with the Press as its chief vehicle, and it supplements the Press by dealings outside the representative system with such organized bodies of men as the Labor Movement. That, again, is only a stop-gap technique. It must, in spite of the disdain which it seems to feel for representative government, in some way base itself upon a popular vote. We have suggested (and an able writer in the "Times" has said the same thing) that Mr. George has made for himself a momentary position which more nearly resembles that of an American President than a British Premier. The questioning imagination goes on to inquire whether in the coming reconstruction this innovation might conceivably be regularized. In the abstract we might decide to select our Premier by a direct popular vote, and to give him by that choice a position independent of Parliamentary majorities. If we did that it would also be logical, by the same train of reasoning, to set up the referendum, thus establishing the direct sovereignty of the people, both in the executive sphere and in legislation. For both changes there may be arguments, but the probabilities are overwhelmingly against them. It is not our national habit to innovate in this way. Innovations with us come haphazard and almost unmarked. We dismiss these suggestions as unreal. There is only one way known to British practice by which governments maintain contact with the popular will. Democracy for us means representative government, and the only way to restore it is to recover for Parliament its authority with its representative character.

What the Directory does from day to day may be transitory. We shall feel the effects of the food muddle and the Labor muddle, but not for ever. Even graver aberrations, like the cotton duties, may be undone, and the failure in Ireland is not irreparable. But there is one decision which must be taken before Easter, which will influence our political development for years to come. The House must decide (if the Directory really leaves it free to decide) whether it will reform the franchise on which it rests, and the method by which it is elected, on the lines laid down by the Speaker's Conference. The decision must obviously govern our politics for a considerable, if uncertain, period to come. If this chance is missed now, the hope of any organic reform is postponed to the dim future. Some trivial arrangements there would have to be, we suppose, to bring the register up to date, and to prevent the disfranchisement of soldiers and munition workers. But the large changes—manhood suffrage, the enfranchisement of women, proportional representation, and the reduction of the costs of election—would have to wait for a distant moment of tranquillity. The next Parliament could not be representative in any real sense of the word. Worse still, if it were a brief two-years' War-Parliament, dominated by some species of coalition, it would not be likely to take up the task of reform. There plainly is little keenness for reform in some sections of the Tory Party, and while Mr. George acts with it, he will not be the author of a democratic franchise. Already one hears whisperings of a sinister programme. "This scheme of reform," they say, "cannot be carried now, nor yet in the next (two years) Parliament. That (say these voices) is no irreparable loss: let us refuse anything less than full adult suffrage." Meanwhile, the "National Party"

will have been formed out of that portion of the Labor Party which allows itself to be mesmerized by Mr. George, with a few Liberal millionaires, Tory democrats, and business journalists, to give it body and funds. It will appeal to the country on a programme of High Protection, Imperial Federation, Adult Suffrage, and, we suppose, Conscription. This programme has no terrors for us, for we are quite content to await the verdict of the people, when the men have come home from the trenches, on Mr. George's amalgam of bureaucracy, Imperialism, and demagoguery.

But the programme (vague and variable as it may be) is sinister in this respect, that it may serve as an excuse for rejecting a good and workable scheme of franchise reform to-day. Mr. George has "torpedoed" one Suffrage Bill already. We do not suspect him (as some women quite naturally do) of covert hostility to their cause. Some men see in politics principles which they espouse or oppose. He sees in them rôles which he assumes or rejects. The rôle of a reformer and liberator suits him. But we see no reason why the country should wait for some years until his fluctuating calculations enable him to assume it. This programme (apart from the probability that the "National party" will never be formed, or will be wrecked as soon as it is formed) would mean that seven years might elapse before women could vote, and before the other indispensable reforms which are included in the Speaker's charter could give us a revitalized representative system. That is a delay which neither the country nor women can afford to brook. Women must be voters before the tasks of industrial and social reconstruction are attempted. Parliament must recover its independence before it faces the tremendous issues involved in the destruction or the maintenance of Free Trade, the future of military service, the control of foreign policy, and the direction of our influence in the international system.

It is good news that Mr. Asquith will move the resolution which accepts the work of the Speaker's Conference as a basis of legislation. He is still by far the most authoritative Parliamentary figure. His conversion to woman suffrage makes him at length the true spokesman of democracy. In the debate and the vote which will follow this opening, we see the turning point in the fortunes of Parliament. It has to deal with a Directory composed of men who are for several distinct reasons hostile to reform. Lords Curzon and Milner are Anti-suffragists. Mr. Henderson has said publicly that the question must wait until peace comes. Mr. George may be saving up for the future an effective electioneering cry. Against these varying attitudes stands a Parliament which feels its own impotence, and knows that it can recover its power only by resuming and improving its representative character. It knows very well that no war-time election can make a really representative House. Its future and our future depends on the firmness with which it insists that the next House shall be representative. The rights of women are a vitally important factor, but not the only factor in this question. The present confusion of our politics, the new groupings, the emergence of all sorts of minorities, the breaking down of party ties, the novelty of the new issues, make the adoption of proportional representation only a little less urgent. The Speaker's scheme is not an ideal charter of reform, but it is a model compromise. Nothing but a compromise can be adopted to-day, and to refuse reform to-day is to refuse it for some years. Lord Lytton has pointed out, in a thoughtful letter to the "Times," that we are allowing the new method of settlement by conference to become nothing better than an excuse for inaction. First, in the case of Ireland, and now in the case of the franchise, an acceptable compromise is framed: the vast majority of reasonable men in both parties accept it honorably, and in the end a handful of impenitent reactionaries is allowed to veto it. That has not yet happened to the franchise compromise. We do not believe that the better minds of the majority of plain men in the Tory Party are really opposed to it. When Mr. Asquith advocates it, not for party reasons (for it offends against several Liberal canons), but in the clear interests of

Parliament and the country, we shall be deeply disappointed if the weight of Conservative opinion is not with him. Save in the matter of the impossible age limit for women electors, the scheme should be adopted as it stands.

But however the Tory Party may vote, it is the plain duty of the Liberal leaders to insist on immediate legislation. The Bill must be drafted at once, and passed in this session. At present these leaders have a thankless and far from brilliant rôle. They are deeply compromised by their surrenders in the Coalition period. They have neglected the task of steadying and educating public opinion. Their inertia and their silence have tempted Mr. George's Press to trade on their indefinite susceptibility to intimidation. Here is a task which lies to their hands, a task which restores them to their natural function as the guardians and exponents of the representative idea. Let them work for the restoration of Parliament. Its courage, its independence, its confidence will return when it feels behind it a complete democracy of men and women, whose votes no clumsy system has distorted, and whose choice has not been limited by the barrier of wealth.

### BAGHDAD AND BEYOND.

THE occupation of Baghdad is an event in a unique setting. Historic cities have sprung into importance again in the vicissitudes of the war, and tiny hamlets emerged from a sheltered retirement into a light that will not soon fade. But Baghdad is a city which can look to a civilization when the great centres of Europe were unconsidered settlements. Its story is so old that its chief home is in the imagination, where it rivals the appeal of Babylon and Nineveh, of Darius and Alexander. It has fallen to an Irish general in command of British and Indian troops, armed with the fruits of the speculations of the last quarter of a century.

Mesopotamia has provided a number of dramatic situations. The first rapid advance up the Tigris was a fine achievement. Townshend's campaign ranks among the characteristic episodes of British history. Its daring, versatility, success, and tragic close have their roots in our national fibre, and though we would rather shut our eyes to the lack of prevision, the blunders, and the indecision which are written over its final chapter, they, too, are part of us, and we shall do well to remember them. General Maude has a more welcome record. He could have pressed beyond the Es Sinn lines soon after Townshend's surrender, but he chose, more wisely, to bide his time. Months were given to the scaffolding from which his success has risen. The communications were improved beyond recognition, and, when all was ready, the position of Kut was patiently and methodically undermined. For some time before the fall of Kut, the German military critics were noting with professional approval each step that made the position of the town more and more precarious. At length it became almost an irrelevance, except that it provided a perilous obsession for the enemy. They did not wish to go while they could stay, yet in holding on they offered General Maude the one thing at which he aimed. Kut mattered very little, but the chance of crushing an army which stupidly held on to the town too long lay nearer the essential purposes of war.

In the result, things fell out as we wished. Maude bridged the river behind Kut, the rearguards at Sanna-i-Yat were brushed aside, and the pursuit began. Almost at once the river-craft took up the chase, and the infantry, lying bivouacked at Shumran, cheered a gunboat as it steamed past them to harry the road by which the Turks fell back. Their force can hardly have been considerable, and their losses must have been extremely heavy; for no serious resistance was made until the Diala was reached. The cavalry were unable to force the position, but the infantry soon carried it, and Baghdad was entered on Sunday morning. It was only a fortnight since the fall of Kut, 100 miles by road, and

almost double by river to the south. A remarkably good performance it must be pronounced whichever way it is regarded. The position below Kut was reasonably safe, because General Maude had extended his left flank to the Euphrates. Baghdad can similarly be consolidated, since the Euphrates at this point can be reached through a river and lake line, hardly half the length of the course of the Shatt-el-Hai, which linked the rivers below Kut. The communications are long and exposed, but the railway will presumably be hurried forward, and we may trust the new régime of prevision to prepare for possible counter-attacks.

But we shall be wrong if we regard the campaign as restricted to a holding on to Baghdad. The best defence of the city, in any case, would be to meet any dangers by a bold offensive, and it is probable that General Maude's operations are part of a concerted plan to put Turkey out of the field. Already the Turks are hastening to fall back from Persia. General Baratoff, who last year contrived to send a small body of cavalry to the British, is moving westwards. Along the road, worn by the feet of thousands of pilgrims, the road which Darius and Alexander followed, the Turks are hastening towards the high rim which separates Persia from Mesopotamia. The road runs through Baghdad, and General Maude has probably already made preparations to receive the enemy. The Russians and the British in this part of the vast field of Asiatic Turkey are co-operating to sweep the Turkish troops westward. The alignment forms a rough sickle, with the handle from Trebizond to Erzerum, a similar formation to that which swept across Serbia; and the purpose of the Allies is to brush the enemy westwards towards northern Syria. The Grand Duke is only waiting for the appropriate moment to set Yudenef's army in motion once more. The position, therefore, holds wide possibilities, and there are certain to be great changes in this area.

For, gravely prejudiced as the Turkish position is by these converging movements, which must concentrate the Allied forces as they develop, the enemy has a further threat to consider. General Murray has cleared the Sinai peninsula. He is now not far from the Palestinian railroad and another route trodden by feet whose echoes the world seems ready to forget. The railway and pipeline are following him also, and these preparations are not merely designed to make his present position sure; they look to vast developments. This, at all events, is the threat they present to the enemy. If the Turks are left alone to deal with their problem, the position may change rapidly. For they are bound to cope with a serious difficulty. If they chose to hold Palestine, as politically the more important, they must risk the possibility of the Allies moving against their rear from the east, and even from the west. Baratoff and Maude may choose to move athwart the track of the Baghdad railway towards Aleppo. A landing about Adana would cut the communications from the west. The alternative plan of reinforcing the Mesopotamian force would again risk the possibility of General Murray moving towards Aleppo from the south. It is to the advantage of the Allies to go forward, since they are acting on converging lines. It would be wiser for the Turks to deal boldly with one group or the other. But the communications towards the east are not such as would encourage a general to remember his interior lines, and it is improbable that anywhere they are a great advantage.

It is strange country for the war of manœuvres. Good mounted troops have a great advantage, and the Allies generally have in their favor the fact that the choice of the Turks once made, is probably irrevocable. The fall of Kut and Baghdad seems to show that they have not the numbers to deal adequately with each threatened advance. They had three months' warning of what has happened. They will probably recall the troops lent to Germany and Austria, and the main fronts will gain to that extent. It is difficult to think that Germany can afford to risk the marring of her Eastern ambitions. But if she is to send forces, the main fronts, again, are weakened. Yet this is probably the course she will take. The Allies may then be compelled to slacken their pace, and Asiatic Turkey may make a recovery. But



what is here gained will be lost in Europe, and in the end, the result will be merely postponed. Already the movements of Baratoff and Maude's signal successes must have weakened the European fronts. Maude has stolen the desire of Germany's heart. There will be much hard fighting in this field in the next few months. The Turks are no despicable opponents. But it is difficult to see how they can avoid disaster alone, and otherwise they will add a new debt to the liabilities of Germany in the hour when her need is greatest.

### THE COTTON FOLLY.

THE defence of the cotton folly in Parliament last Wednesday reeked with dishonesty and inconsistency. First came the attempt to deprecate the impropriety of treating as a matter of contention "the free and generous gift of the people of India." Now, Mr. Chamberlain, in using this language, must know that "the people of India" have no voice in this or any other act of government, and that, if they had, they would be forced to think twice before contributing out of their dire poverty this huge sum of one hundred millions to the resources of their wealthy rulers. Nor ought a poor subject people, already burdened with large increases of war taxation, to be compelled by its Government to make this "gift." Finally, Mr. Chamberlain was forced to explain that it was not really a "free" gift at all, but a bargain in which the raising of the cotton duties offsets the contribution to the war! No real light was thrown, either in the debate or in the speeches to Lancashire deputations, on the origins of this transaction. We are indeed told by Mr. Bonar Law that the proposal of the contribution was not suggested by our Government, but came from the Government of India "absolutely spontaneously." We are sceptical of so convenient a spontaneity. Reason looks with coldness upon spontaneous generation as an efficient cause. It would, at any rate, have been interesting to know the organ by which this spontaneity first broke into articulate speech.

Equally vain was the attempt to explain why last year's resolve to leave this fiscal issue with the others for settlement after the war, was suddenly reversed. Mr. Chamberlain says that "circumstances" had changed. But "circumstances" did not change of their own motion. The Indian Government changed the circumstances, and brought up the controversy they refused last year by stimulating this "spontaneous" gift. Why was it done? It cannot be explained on mere grounds of the financial emergency of Great Britain, grave as is that emergency. For no new sudden fund is liberated for our use by this arrangement, which, so far as money goes, is only of the nature of a guarantee. The Government of India, by arrangement with ours, must have decided, for some reasons which still remain obscure, to challenge Lancashire. For even granting that "India" was so anxious to make a free gift, the amount of that gift lay at her discretion. If it had been fixed at 75 instead of 100 millions, the dilemma, of which Mr. Law made such a naive confession, of choosing between trouble in India and trouble in Lancashire need never have arisen. We, therefore, must still wait to know why a step was taken by a Government so devoted to the unity of the Empire and of the Alliance, which was bound to set India at loggerheads, not only with Lancashire, but with Japan. For Japan, as Mr. Asquith reminded the House, competes more closely with Bombay in the coarser counts of cotton goods.

But the sheer dishonesty of the business was effectively exposed when Sir John Simon compared the two voices of Mr. George—that in which he assured the men of Lancashire that "under ordinary circumstances, your case would be irrefutable," and that in which he pleaded for protection of the Bombay millowners as "a great act of justice." If it is, indeed, "just" that the Government of India should protect native industries, believing that course to be conducive to the welfare of the Indian people, what becomes of the irrefutable case of

Lancashire under any sort of circumstances? There are some, indeed, who argue that this new liberty accorded to India to put on a tariff against this country, is a real and important step towards national liberty and self-government, and that, even if Protection is a mistaken policy, the country ought to be allowed to make its own mistakes. Why, they ask, should the selfish interests of Lancashire be permitted to impede this essentially beneficent process? Our reply is that these gentlemen deceive themselves. This protective measure is not intended as an instalment or a constituent part of a general process of responsible self-government of India. Is an Imperial Government which lacks the intelligence or the honesty to keep its pledged word to give Home Rule to Ireland, to be trusted to endow the Indian people with the conduct of their own affairs? No. It is manifest from Mr. Chamberlain's speech that this slice of Protection is no portion of a large, considered, and conciliatory new policy, but merely a dole flung out to buy off discontent. If any other clear intention attaches to it, it is that, as Mr. Law hinted, it may furnish a basis of further bargaining for preferences, probably by means of higher tariffs against foreigners after the war.

The contention that Liberals should not protest, because India is treated *pro hac vice* as a self-governing country, is a thoroughly dangerous argument. India is not self-governing, and this particular action is not the action of a body justly claiming to represent the will or interests of the Indian people. It is the arbitrary action of a little group of officials conniving with a little group of prosperous business men, and playing on the mistaken "economic nationalism" of a somewhat larger number of educated natives. This is a bad and a foolish game, feeding the worse while it starves the better side of Indian patriotism. For British Liberals must know that the Protectionist policy is likely to grow with rapidity, and to rear a national exclusiveness injurious to the unity of the Empire, as well as to its foreign relations. The example adopted for India will spread both extensively and intensively throughout our Crown Colonies and Dependencies. Surely then it might have been expected that Liberals would register a firm and unanimous protest against this act of folly. Tactically, the Government have scored a victory; for they reckoned on the leniency of Mr. Asquith and his followers. This abstention lay within the calculation of their game. Is there, then, no single cause of liberty that Liberals are prepared to defend?

### "THE ORIGIN AND INCEPTION."

No matter how long the war lasts, the Dardanelles Campaign will always be remembered as one of the most glorious, though most tragic, chapters in its history, and for generations to come the course of it will be followed with enthusiasm, and studied with controversy. No one now disputes the brilliancy of the strategical idea. The credit of it belongs to Mr. Winston Churchill, who proposed it originally on November 25th, 1914, in order to defend Egypt by striking at the heart of the Turkish Empire. Success would have ensured far more than the defence of Egypt. Success would have opened a high-road for the supply of munitions and equipment to Russia, and a high-road for returning ships laden with Russian wheat. It would have severed the German communication with the Middle East, and rendered our Mesopotamian campaign either unnecessary or far more speedily fortunate. On the political side, it would have held Bulgaria steady in neutrality, or brought her into our alliance. It might have saved Serbia without even an effort at Salonika, and certainly it would have averted our present difficult relation to Greece. Throughout the whole Balkans, the Allies would be holding the position which the enemy now holds, and the Central Powers would be surrounded by an iron circle complete at every point, except upon the Baltic coast and their Swiss frontier.

What was it that caused the failure of hopes so splendid—hopes which, if fulfilled, might have given Europe peace a year or even eighteen months ago? We do not say that the campaign entirely failed of any object. It came to Russia's aid at a time of severe pressure. It kept Bulgaria from the enemy's side for many months. It held large armies of Turks (some say 300,000, but certainly at least 200,000) from attacking Russia or our own possessions elsewhere. But the splendor of the hopes was never realized, and the cause of the failure from the very outset—from "the origin and inception," as the Commission's Report calls it—lay in the personality and consequent actions of three or four men who attended that War Council, which, after the first four months of the war, supplanted the former Committee of Imperial Defence. This Council was nominally a committee of the Cabinet, with some experts added; but in actual fact it took its decisions without consulting the Cabinet or informing the other members of it. Various Cabinet Ministers might put in an appearance now and then, but the real responsibility rested with Mr. Asquith, Lord Kitchener, and Mr. Winston Churchill alone.

Let us take Mr. Winston Churchill first, for, as we said, the strategical idea was his. Perhaps we may also say that the unreasoning fondness of the father for the child was ultimately the cause of its ruin. On November 3rd (four days after Turkey's declaration of war) our ships bombarded the Dardanelles forts for ten minutes, merely to discover the effective range of their guns. It was a serious mistake, for it put the Turks on the alert. The War Council was not consulted. The order issued solely from the Admiralty, and Mr. Churchill, as First Lord, must be held responsible. On November 25th, as we said, Mr. Churchill laid his full proposal for striking at Constantinople through the Dardanelles before the War Council. But Lord Kitchener discouraged immediate action, and the suggestion was allowed to slide till January 2nd, 1915, when Russia, being hard pressed in the Caucasus, appealed for help, and Lord Kitchener promised "a demonstration," though not holding out any great hopes. The question was, what form the demonstration should take, and Mr. Churchill very naturally revived his scheme. But how was that scheme to be carried through? Here we come upon the fatal error which, in our opinion, led to the ultimate loss, evacuation, and collapse.

Like every sane man, expert or layman, Mr. Churchill favored a joint naval and military attack. Had he gained this point, he might have won the glory of finishing the war. But at that moment, Lord Kitchener refused the troops, which he estimated (rightly, as events proved) at 150,000 men. He had his eye on home defence, on Egypt (always his special care), and on the coming action in France, which resulted in the Neuve Chapelle "push." Undeterred by this refusal, Mr. Churchill resolved to try what could be done by the Navy alone. He had seen in Antwerp the overwhelming effect of heavy guns upon forts, and had read of that effect at Liège and Namur. If German guns had such effect upon forts deemed impregnable, why should not the guns of super-Dreadnoughts like the "Queen Elizabeth" have a similar effect upon Turkish forts? This was a false analogy between land and sea force. But he pressed it upon Lord Kitchener, who reluctantly yielded, still regarding the movement as a "demonstration" from which we could withdraw at any time we chose. To Mr. Churchill, Vice-Admiral Carden, then commanding off the Dardanelles, replied that, though the Straits could not be rushed, they might be forced by extended operations with a large number of ships in about a month. This was the scheme which Mr. Churchill now resolved to urge upon the War Council, and he telegraphed to Vice-Admiral Carden, "High authorities here concur in your opinion." Who were those high authorities? Vice-Admiral Carden naturally supposed they included, at least, Lord Fisher and Sir Henry Jackson, with Sir Arthur Wilson probably besides, to say nothing of the Board of Admiralty as a whole.

Here we come upon the behavior of the "experts," which to the layman must appear extraordinary. On January 5th, Sir Henry Jackson drew up a memorandum on forcing the Dardanelles and Bosphorus by the Allied fleets without military co-operation. The document is remarkable because in it, almost alone during these transactions, the unenviable position of the fleet is pointed out, even if it reached Constantinople and bombarded it without a land force to occupy the position. It also mentioned the "indiscriminate massacres" which would probably ensue. Sir Henry Jackson was at heart entirely opposed to a purely naval expedition. In his evidence he said he thought "it would be a mad thing to do." Yet he did not say this openly at the time. Outwardly, he "concurred generally" with Carden's plans, though in evidence he said he intended to approve an attack only on the outer forts.

At first sight, to the outside mind, the silence of Lord Fisher and Sir Arthur Wilson appears more unaccountable. Both were present at the War Council meetings as experts, and sat at the same table with the other members. The reputation of both was of the highest, and Lord Fisher's on sea was hardly surpassed by Lord Kitchener's on land. Yet, unless a direct question was put to them (which never happened), they sat silent. Both maintained in evidence that this was their duty. They were not members of the War Council. They were there to help the First Lord, not to enter into altercation with him. In this general conception of their duty, they are strongly supported by Mr. Andrew Fisher and Sir Thomas Mackenzie in separate minutes to the report, though the opinion of Mr. Asquith, Mr. Balfour, Lord Crewe, and others was given against them. Lord Fisher's case, indeed, like so many other things, is unfairly presented. He never believed in the Expedition; he threatened resignation as it developed; and it seems to be his general case that he did not pursue this course, first, because he was informed that his protest having been made, his duty was discharged, secondly, because of the political importance of relieving Russia. He did finally resign when he considered that the Expedition threatened the power of the fleet in the decisive theatre of the war. On the other hand, the statesmen insisted that from the silence of the experts they assumed their concurrence. As we have said, this assumption was, in Lord Fisher's case, unjustified, and we cannot imagine how it was ever taken for granted. On one occasion, so far from concurring, Lord Fisher, thinking there was no alternative to silence but resignation, rose from the table to resign, and was only induced to return by Lord Kitchener's personal appeal (January 27th). It is true that his objection was largely due to the interference of the scheme with another design which he had in mind. None the less, difficult as his position was under so impetuous and self-willed a First Lord, the majority of the Commission was probably right in holding that the experts should formally have expressed their opinions, even though not definitely asked. Far more unquestionably are the Commissioners right in condemning Mr. Churchill for urging these experts to give a silent, though manifestly very reluctant, assent to the undertaking, instead of insisting upon their expressing their own views freely to the Council. The Commissioners remark that Mr. Churchill was carried away by his sanguine temperament and his firm belief in the success of the undertaking which he advocated. Such temperament and belief led directly, in our opinion, to the most grievous error of the campaign. Not only did they prevent his calling upon the experts for their personal views at the Council, but, as we gather from Mr. Walter Roch's detailed minute, they prevented him from sharing with the Council certain documents unfavorable to his plan, such as Sir Henry Jackson's memorandum of January 5th, and Lord Fisher's memorandum of January 25th, which was addressed, certainly, to the Prime Minister, but seen, and answered in a memorandum, by Mr. Churchill himself.

Of Lord Kitchener, Mr. Churchill said in evidence: "All-powerful, imperturbable, reserved, he dominated absolutely our counsels at this time"; "when he gave a decision, it was invariably accepted as final." Minister



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for War upon the Council, Lord Kitchener was also his own expert. It is true that Sir James Wolfe Murray attended the meetings as Chief of the Imperial General Staff, but he was never asked to express an opinion, and, like the distinguished naval experts, he held his tongue. "Lord Kitchener," he said, "acted very much as his own Chief of the Staff." It was the nature of that distinguished man always to concentrate everything in his own hands, and to fill his brain with a burdensome excess of detail. It was as though the matron of a great hospital insisted on scouring the wards. As General Callwell said in evidence, "the General Staff practically ceased to exist because it was not consulted"; "Lord Kitchener never conferred with anyone very much." Secretive and impenetrable, he took upon himself in this enormous war a weight of detail with which no human being could cope. The result, as seen in the Dardanelles Campaign, was a distracted and uncertain mind. Against his better judgment, he agreed to the purely naval tactics, half-hoping for a withdrawal, half-conscious that a large military force would ultimately be required. So, during weeks of indecision between the West and East, "we drifted," in General Callwell's words, "into the big military attack." Still Lord Kitchener hesitated. On February 16th the War Council decided to send the famous 29th Division to Lemnos. On the 20th he refused to let it go. On March 10th he reversed this decision. We do not know his reason for refusal, and it may have been unanswerable. But the result was that the division, which might have started on February 22nd, did not start till March 16th—a loss of three vital and irretrievable weeks. Meanwhile, Sir Ian Hamilton had already been appointed to the command of the land forces (March 13th); but still Lord Kitchener gave him to understand that probably they would not be used, and no preliminary scheme of operations had been drawn up. Seldom has a General started upon a great enterprise with vaguer instructions and more serious disadvantages.

Lord Kitchener has passed beyond self-defence, but Mr. Asquith, the third dominant Minister in the War Council, can still defend himself against the malignity of those among the present Directory's supporters who have used the Report as a means to vilify his career and undermine his reputation. On three points, and three points only, as it seems to us, can a certain amount of blame be attached to the conduct of the Council by its Chairman. On the decisive day of January 13th, he allowed the Council to remain uncertain as to the exact meaning of its resolution: "The Admiralty should prepare for a naval expedition in February to bombard and take the Gallipoli Peninsula, with Constantinople as its objective." Though aware that the experts condemned the attack on forts by ships unaided by any military force, he did not insist upon their giving their opinion and reasons in the Council. Their minds were never fully and adequately explored. And, thirdly, Mr. Asquith failed to summon the Council between March 19th and May 14th. This is the error most greedily seized upon by his enemies, and we admit that, apart from the Dardanelles, there might have been useful discussion during that stormy time. But as to the Dardanelles, there was no more to be said. The Expedition was launched; it was in train; the only possible question was its withdrawal at the moment when Sir Ian took up his command. Everyone must have known that a soldier of his spirit would never advise such a step; and there is reason to believe that even Mr. Asquith's most persistent enemies may some day admit very sufficient cause why a withdrawal could not at that time even be contemplated. These reasons his successor and assiduous colleague on the War Council knew perfectly well, and yet he has not hesitated to use this Report as a means of discrediting his former chief. For the rest, the charge of "no consultation" between March 19th and May 14th is untrue, so far as it suggests a want of co-operation between the Government and the military and naval authorities. Such discussions were, we imagine, of daily occurrence. And if the Council did not sit within this period, the Cabinet sat again and again, and it is obvious that the Expedition must have been continually in its eye.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

THE Russian Revolution has given thousands of breasts the first full emotion of hope and joy they have felt since the war began. Sympathy flows from every generous heart, and with it a revived belief in a true and fine issue of the war. The German example seemed at one hour to have achieved a moral conquest of the world, not least conspicuously of ourselves. Now Liberalism has won its first great victory on the moral battleground where all along the true conflict was going on. The Kaiser is a lonely autocrat, and Petrograd sends a sure and swift message of liberation to his people. The effect on the war should also be of the utmost consequence. The Russian armies are now revolutionary, and revolutionary armies fight well. If they hold, find their true leaders, and are properly supplied, their force will be many times multiplied. But it is the shattering moral effect of the Revolution which will tell. It has come just in time, for us as for all the world. Association with the Tsar was a curse and an incubus. Alliance with the Russian people is a glory.

THE Government has had the first and the second lesson read to it in more or less comminatory terms by Mr. Redmond and Mr. Asquith, and we shall now see whether it has the wit to mend its ways. Mr. George's present fate is to be saved by Mr. Asquith. Had the ex-Premier raised his hand on Wednesday, the Government would have been lost. On Sunday the opinion was that its fate was sealed, that Mr. George must go, and either dissolve or take his seat in an Administration headed by Mr. Bonar Law. The stroke was never delivered. The Liberal Leaders wavered, and finally swayed to their chief's Fabian counsels and his sense of the overshadowing issue of the war. But Mr. George's ascendancy is going. He enters the House almost a stranger, feeds it with a kind of secretaries' hash of false argument, and sees it making unfriendly mental comparisons between his Parliamentary style and his predecessor's. Had he spoken more considerately and weightily, he might even have saved a division. But his tone and his assumption that the cotton duties were a great act of Indian enthusiasm and British justice hardened Lancashire's heart; for Lancashire knew that it was merely a case of one official in India signalling to another in London.

BUT if Mr. George cannot direct Parliament or the nation, what is to become of his Government? Three developments are discussed. The first springs from the Government's earlier *éclat*. A deliberate move may be made to a National Party, in which Toryism would be one factor, but only a factor, and Mr. George be the driver of a mixed team of Protectionists, Imperialists, and Nationalists. I doubt this possibility to-day. The George legend is going the way of the Kitchener legend, only faster. The second idea is a General Election. To that device, Mr. George, who has no party, is probably less inclined than the Tories, who have. For them he is chiefly a weapon to strike down Liberalism, and when that work is done, they have no further use for him. The third is a reconstruction on the lines which were suggested to Mr. Asquith after Mr. George's stroke had destroyed his Premiership. In other words, there would be a Conservative Prime Minister, who would be Mr. Bonar Law (the Tory favorite of the hour), and Mr. George would serve where he ruled. The course has some advantages. It would confer power where power lies; it would reduce the instability and unsettlement which hover, like sea-birds round a steamship, in Mr. George's adventurous track. And if moderate elements were attracted, it might restore the vanishing unity of the nation.

THERE is a Tory movement, not, I hope, a considerable one, against a Reform Bill issuing from the Speaker's Conference. A memorandum has gone round the House of Commons for signature, but only sixty Unionists have put their names, and this is by no means a frightening number. There are one or two other difficult elements. The London Liberal members, for example, dislike proportional representation, which is so likely to improve their position and raise the standard of their candidatures. But I think the House, in numbers and statesmanship, is predominantly for a Bill. It is for the Government to choose between the "light" and the "dark forces," and its choice is of great moment. It must either begin to build up a living national constituency of men and women, or seek to draw a false verdict from a half-dead one. It cannot have decided against a Bill, or it would not have asked Mr. Asquith to move his resolution. Its evident line is to take its policy from the House. Therefore, this momentous occasion rests with Mr. Asquith, who is invested for the nonce with a kind of deputy-kingship of the Commons.

THE point of curiosity in the Dardanelles debate is to discover whether Mr. George will array himself in the white sheet with which he has generously enveloped Mr. Asquith. Mr. George's association with the expedition was close and constant. He was a member of the War Council, and not, it may be imagined, a silent one. He attended all its meetings. The Report offers no suggestion that he opposed the principle or the plan of the Expedition, though he may well have wished to tack the Salonikan project on to it. He was, of course, aware of the reasons of diplomacy which turned the enterprise into a mixed adventure in soldiering and politics, and, one fears, put the one arm very much at the service of the other. This side of the expedition was very partially under our control, and yet when it is cut away the story of the Report becomes a piece of arbitrary editing. Why, then, was it allowed to appear? It admittedly deals with one phase of the expedition only, and that the least costly in blood. It is admittedly a preface to the main theme of the expedition, whose core was in the military attempt, and it has no relevance to any issue but a purely political one. One may think as ill as one pleases of the workmanship, political and military, which it half discloses, and yet, after last week's orgy of malice, conclude that the country has more cause to be ashamed of the appearance of the Report, and of the uses to which it has been put, than of all her losses and disappointments put together.

A MILITARY writer, approving generally THE NATION'S criticism of the German withdrawal, sends me the following imaginative sketch of its motives:—

"It seems fairly obvious that Hindenburg said to himself something like this:—

"(1) Retreat from trenches to prepared positions behind is a singularly easy operation, because unlike a retirement in open country it is almost out of sight of possible observation.

"(2) I don't want any of France and can score off that troublesome Reventlow and his like by getting rid of it strategically bit by bit.

"(3) In doing so I hold up my strongest enemies, by confusing their offensive schemes, for a period of perhaps nine months, during which I mean to force peace somehow.

"(4) Anyhow, I've got to retire out of some of that salient, because they've made it untenable.

"(5) In the West I have only this choice, to sacrifice men unduly, or to sacrifice prestige to a certain extent. I choose the latter.

"My impression is that if the Germans find this retreating game as successful as they hope, they may ultimately retire to a line running roughly from N. of Arras, passing in front of Cambrai, and joining the present line somewhere not far N.W. of Verdun. If they can spend the spring and summer doing this they will obviously have scored tremendously, shortening their front at every step, and saving men increasingly."

THE report of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's meeting with the trade union delegation gives but a slight notion of its character. It mostly consisted, not of extremists or of the younger groups and representatives of trade unions, but of its greybeards. It could hardly have been more critical. Mr. Chamberlain showed good temper and intelligence, but little detailed knowledge and the questions almost snowed him under, while Mr. Hodge could get but a scant and impatient hearing. What is to happen? The mechanics of the scheme have broken down, if they could ever be said to exist. Its result is pitiful, for only a handful of workmen, and hardly any of the skilled classes, have enlisted; and when they do, the door of national service is either shut in their faces or opened on to some bye-way of uselessness. Thus, a good gardener applies for agricultural work, is asked whether he will take munition-making or clerking, and is finally sent adrift, having lost his old employment. A skilled machinist is finally set to trundling parcels about a great store. And so on. Meanwhile, farms are derelict, the corn unthreshed, the fields unploughed, the cattle sold for want of tending. Was ever such a farce?

"THESE BE THY GODS . . ."

(*Rudis indigestaque moles.*)

A WELTER, sans purpose or vision,  
Direction, cohesion, or grit:  
To name it with simple precision—  
A Bottomley's Pit.

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### ON PLOTS AND SPIES.

MOST of us have felt during this war an uncanny sense of reminiscence. There seems to be a sort of inherited memory in us, which causes us in some dim way to live over again the experiences of our great-grandfathers in the last universal war. Again and again some experience, wholly novel in our own lives, strikes us with a bewildering and dreamy familiarity. We were once in this place before, when or how we cannot recollect. We have passed this way before, for something in our nervous system answers to it, though assuredly in our own finite persons we were never here before. We react to the familiar suggestion exactly as our ancestors did, and if the grand manner is as far from us as the powder and the decorative clothes, there is still an inherited aptitude in our behavior. The poison trial of last week was one of these reminiscences. It is in itself an episode so absurd and so little typical of our century, that one is tempted to explain it as a kind of half-conscious reversion to ancestral precedents. That kind of thing happened in the last universal war. There is, so to speak, a dramatic propriety which requires it. The conditions, to be sure, present only the faintest of analogies. There are pacifists to-day, who oppose the war, but there are no pro-Germans, as in those days there was an ardent pro-French Party. The German cause represents no embattled doctrine which has its adherents in our own opposition. On the contrary, the only people among ourselves who are bitten with German ideas are precisely those who preach the war to the bitter end. Our anti-war party does not meet, as the reformers did in 1794, at the "Crown and Anchor" Tavern, to sing "Ca ira" and a heady ode by Sir William Jones, in which he celebrated the deaths of tyrants and vowed, in lines based on the Athenian model, that "verdant myrtle's branchy pride" should his "thirsty blade entwine." Sir William Jones's blade was not, in fact, thirsty, or if it was he did nothing to satisfy its thirst. But language of this stamp may have given to Dundas and Pitt some faint excuse for the zeal with which they smelt out conspiracies and



detected immature murder. Burke had disseminated terror, and it was a real panic which wrecked the houses of the reformers, invaded Thomas Hardy's harmless bootshop in Piccadilly, and caused "even respectable and honest men" (as Holcroft put it) to "turn spies and informers on their friends from a sense of public duty." *Habeas corpus* was suspended with a thoroughness of which our own Defence of the Realm Act is a poor imitation, and the Privy Council sat as a sort of Star Chamber to examine suspects. Then as now there was a crazy plot (real or imaginary) to murder with a poisoned arrow. But most of the cases were flimsier than this. A spy declared that he heard Thomas Hardy declare that he "would cut off the King's head as easily as he would shave himself," while another informer had heard a Radical announce in the public coach that he would "as soon have the King's head off as he would tear a bit of paper." Truth to tell, juries were not always ready to capitulate to such evidence, but the case which sent the delegates to the Edinburgh Convention to Botany Bay was scarcely stronger.

In such an atmosphere the informer and the *agent provocateur* will always thrive. Conspirators, one suspects, are really the simplest of mankind, and the annals of political crime suggest that with all their melodramatic and fantastic precautions they are very easily victimized. The leading case is recent and Russian. The greatest provoking agent in history was undoubtedly that strange personality known as Azeff, who led and betrayed the Russian terrorist movement a few years ago, and eventually effected a kind of homœopathic cure. He seems to have begun his career as a genuine revolutionist. He sold himself to the secret police, and then, thanks to the facility which it gave him for the commission of crime, won an ascendancy so immense over his simpler and honest comrades that he became their acknowledged chief. The peculiarity of his case was that while he betrayed the honest terrorists by scores and foiled a good many of their plans, he did nevertheless carry out some plots effectively and ruthlessly. There seems to be no doubt that while he was a paid spy he arranged the murders of MM. Plehve and Stolypin, and some others no less notorious. The only theory which fits the facts is that one faction of the "dark forces" hired him to remove its rivals. The revolutionists who believed themselves to be assassinating in the holy cause of liberty were in reality only carrying out a police intrigue at the dictation of a police spy. This dismal discovery was the end of Terrorism. It is only in Russia that the institution of the provoking agent has ever flourished to such a grotesque extent as this. The Western practice has always confined the use of these unclean beings to the nursing of plots which are foiled before they take effect. The notorious instance in our own history was the Cato Street conspiracy. We do not know whether any sufficiently sceptical historian has ever investigated that mad adventure. It certainly was a genuine plot in the sense that the arch-conspirator, Thistlewood, was a desperate, half-sane fanatic, who needed guidance perhaps, but certainly no prompting. He was bent on personal revenge against certain Tory Ministers of the day, and his revenge was really the emotional basis of his fantastic plans for a revolutionary *coup d'état*. Nevertheless there is reason to believe that the spy Edwards was more than a detective. He suggested the plan of murdering the hated Ministers at dinner. He shaped the plot; he suggested vital details; he may have prompted it in some degree, and sustained the ardor of the conspirators. Edwards disappeared, and the curiosity of the Opposition in the Commons failed to extort from the Tory Government any explanation of the part which he had played, or any admission of the means adopted to shield him and reward him. The post-war reaction was supreme in 1820, and, on the whole, the ruling classes held that it was legitimate to employ agents to bring smouldering conspiracies to a shape in which they could be detected, foiled, and crushed.

The Wheeldon case was no sillier than the Cato Street Conspiracy, though we imagine that this singular Derbyshire family was, in fact, much less dangerous

than Thistlewood and his gang of mad desperadoes. They represent a phase of opinion commoner in Russia than among ourselves. It presupposes just enough education for the rejection of conventional morality, and just enough intelligence for the perception that there is much amiss in the world. It stops short of the further perception that for these ills there are large social and economic causes, and imagines that the removal of this or the other individual would cure them. Alert but uninstructed, it rushes blindly to every phase of extreme theory—anarchism, atheism, socialism, non-resistance, militant feminism, and the like—and is capable of combining a horror of the violence of war with a readiness to resort to the violence of political assassination. It is more often a ferment of emotions which plays with fantastic, unrealized plots and seeks a safety valve in lurid language, than a resolute practical habit of mind which really means to compass its dangerous ends. That is the real reason why scrupulous opinion regards the use of provoking agents with a proper repugnance. A group of immature young people, inexperienced, excitable, vain but generous, may chatter of desperate deeds in such an atmosphere as that of Russia, and may even amuse itself with detailed plans. But the plans would not be followed up, unless the hired tempter had been there to incite and organize. It must have happened in hundreds of cases in Russia, that young people who were only dreamers and talkers, have by this diabolic police mechanism been driven into the first stages of crime. What might have been a harmless extravagance of youth which would have passed with ripening years, has blighted what might have been a useful and devoted life. The Wheeldon case is not quite in this category. Mrs. Wheeldon was a mature and almost elderly woman. The family were not mere talkers, for they seem to have taken part in Mrs. Pankhurst's propaganda by deeds, at all events to the extent of burning an old church. Their study of poisons suggested a certain concentration of mind. They were far from being sympathetic rebels, and their manifestly untruthful defence was not in keeping with the tradition of honorable fanatics. It is quite clear that they were willing to aid the police agents, whom they mistook for comrades, in a scheme of murder. When all this is admitted, we have still to know how far the actual initiative came from the two agents. Were they the active force in the absurd conspiracy, or were the Wheeldons and Masons? The temptation may conceivably have carried the condemned family further than they would ever have gone if they had been left to their own devices. The use of spies may be inevitable, but the use of spies who propose plots is contrary to any humane or decent tradition. The failure to produce "Gordon" in the witness-box stamps the whole proceedings with a sinister irregularity. We do not contend that innocence has suffered; what has suffered is rather the good repute of the law. These methods carry us back too closely to the repressions of Dundas, and they lack the excuse of panic.

#### MATTER AND ITS STRUCTURE.

MODERN science, which depends upon observation and experiment, has shown an odd tendency to revolve about metaphysical ideas. While it is sharply distinguished from ancient and medieval science by its methods, and repudiates the mere deductive processes by means of which the original *corpus scientiæ* was derived, it has been cast back more and more upon the primitive conceptions of things. Matter is not strictly the concern of the student of science, yet the physicist or chemist of to-day finds himself compelled by each characteristic line of inquiry to formulate some hypothesis of the basic stuff of the material world. And it is interesting to discover that the view he takes of it is fundamentally the same as that of the earliest philosophers. Aristotle's conception of the external world was that of a vast series of forms imposed upon a primitive stuff which underlay everything, being merely a sort of framework for various



forms. And the chemist of to-day continually proposes to himself the question whether there really is an "Urstoff," or protyle from which complex things have been evolved.

Take electricity, which seems a fairly concrete thing. Is it matter, or a property of matter, or *the* matter? For physics and chemistry as they exist to-day cannot be dissociated from it. Modern physical science can hardly advance a pace without coming into contact with some manifestation of electricity. If by a process of analysis we follow matter back to its ultimate and irreducible expressions, we are faced by the clear evidences of electrical reactions. And yet, just as ancient science evolved an idea which seemed scarcely compatible with the view of a world whose substratum is one primitive stuff, modern science has found no means to clear a distinct atomic theory out of the way. Democritus, Dalton, Crookes, and Thompson, all found themselves impelled, though for different reasons, to hold that matter cannot be reduced past a certain point. Modern science has shown further complexities in this ultimate stage. If there were a protyle, as men like Crookes hold ("Chemical Discovery and Invention in the Twentieth Century." By Sir William A. Tilden. Routledge), surely it is a strange thing that in every element we find the existence of atoms, which have a certain complexity of structure and show signs of a dualism. Even twenty years ago the atom was generally regarded as a simple piece of a simple stuff. But now we are not sure of the stability of the element, and though the atom resists reduction beyond a point, it is obviously dual. Any atom is now conceived to be of a definite structure. It has a nucleus (or a circumference) of positive electricity, and a certain number of units of negative electricity, electrons. But since the electrons repel one another, there is clear proof that they cannot be arranged anyhow in the element, but must have a definite series of positions with regard to the positive nucleus in order to preserve neutrality. We have, therefore, in the simplest and smallest particle of matter of which we can conceive a very real complexity of structure.

It is the structure of things which has proved the most fascinating line of modern discovery. The crystals of substances can be shown to have a simple and definite atomic structure. The Braggs, father and son, have proved that the atoms in a crystal have something of the crude arrangement of a thoroughly satisfactory garden city. They stand in regular order at definite distances apart, and these distances can be measured. Around them are symmetrically grouped other atoms; and it is not until the crystals are dissolved or melted that the atoms select their affinities and behave like respectable partners in the genuine molecule of a compound body. And the idea of structure is not confined to crystalline bodies, though it is in them that it can be experimentally verified. The carbon compounds which make up the subject matter of organic chemistry give many evidences of structural arrangements. There are numerous compounds which can be analyzed and proved to have the same composition and the same percentage composition and yet have different properties. Thus, three different paraffins have the same composition, and no known test can find any difference in the percentage of the ingredients. Their difference springs from a different arrangement of the atoms. If we could discover the apparatus, it is possible we should find that structure is at the essence of all differentiation. Clearly the vast strides made by modern chemistry are largely dependent upon apparatus, and it seems impossible to maintain—as it is maintained—that outside the permanent boundaries of atoms, outside their trench systems, there lie some six patrol units which may be cut off without any resulting change in the atom. If these vagrant electrons are in the atomic system, it is inconceivable they are not of it. Until now, however, they seem to be purely neutral in alliance or in default.

Yet the structure of the atom is a more workable theory than the structure of the elements of which atoms are units. Science has from various directions converged on the conclusion that the ultimate stuff is but one, and the question arises how did these more complex elements

evolve. There is now clear evidence of the transmutation of elements. Radioactivity has given that idea to the world, and one of the least romantic of men of science vouches for it. Rutherford's degradation theory was merely a generalization from observed fact, and the heavier elements, down to lead, can be taken as degradation products. It is but a small step from this fact, though even so it may be too great, to the assumption of the possibility of transmutation down to a primitive matter. For Mendeléeff established a distinct connection between the quantity of matter, the mass of an element, and its properties. He even lived to see the filling in of the vacant niches which we had left for several deduced elements; and the theory underlying his work is irrevocably part of modern science. But if properties do depend upon mass in some way, and we have the verified case of elements being changed by the subtraction of mass, we have here a fair *prima facie* case for believing in the ultimate reduction to a first stuff, which has the unique property of a capacity for properties.

The difficulty of discontinuity stands in the way. One would think that there should be an infinite series of different things, and not merely eighty-three. There should be numbers of cases of elements, like nickel and cobalt, very similar in their properties, because they possess almost the same mass. It is possible there may be such shades and gradations which escape our recognition, because we have no apparatus to measure their differences. And how should we build up these diverse elements? Sir William Crookes imagined a protyle, a primitive stuff, in the form of a mist of particles which, gradually accreting in larger and larger clusters, gave rise to elemental atoms. In Sir William Tilden's fascinating book he gives reasons for not accepting this theory. But it is no real objection to suggest that the radioactive elements were not formed by a process of condensation because we can verify their disintegration from more complex elements. They would not disintegrate if they were not more unstable, and the verification of an undoing of a process is rather the suggestion that the process was originally done. But if we retrace our steps to the beginnings, we find ourselves confronted with this complex state, the atom, in which the positive nucleus is at least in part the inert element helium, and the rest is units of negative electricity. The return to ancient science, while it has strengthened one of its fundamental tenets, has unearthed a host of further difficulties. For the moment the problems resist all attempts at solution, and seem to demand a different sort of attack.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE PERSECUTION OF CONSCIENCE.

SIR,—I was glad to see Lord Sheffield's letter in your last issue.

I cannot believe that the British public are aware of the treatment that is being meted out to a number of honorable citizens who, as Conscientious Objectors to military service, are now suffering imprisonment because of the failure of the Government to carry out their promises and to honor the intention of their own Acts of Parliament and Regulations.

The Military Service Act undoubtedly contemplated that the Conscientious Objector would be granted at any rate that measure of relief which, to quote Mr. Long's instructions to Tribunals, would be "adequate to meet" his "genuine conscientious scruples." The Act itself says that an applicant may claim exemption "on the ground of conscientious objection to the undertaking of combatant service," and adds that "the Local Tribunals, if they consider the grounds of an application established, shall grant such a certificate," which "may be either absolute, conditional, or temporary," may exempt from combatant service only, or "may be conditional on the applicant being engaged in some work which, in the opinion of the Tribunal dealing with the case, is of national importance."

During the debates we were assured again and again that the Government did not contemplate or desire the persecution of the genuine Conscientious Objector. Lord Lansdowne, in the House of Lords, on January 26th, 1916, referring to such cases, said that they "are men whose convictions are very deep and

profound, and who are in all ways entitled to our respect; and in this clause I venture to think we do treat them with respect. We enable the Tribunals to grant to those Conscientious Objectors an exemption which may be either an absolute exemption or conditional on the objector finding employment in some work of national importance. We cannot go further than that." And later in the same debate, in reply to a question, he added:—"In our view it is much better that the Tribunals should be in a position to give what I may call without disrespect, the out-and-out Conscientious Objector an absolute dispensation."

Mr. Herbert Samuel, speaking on behalf of the Government in the House of Commons during the Committee Stage of Military Service Bill No. 2, said:—

"Are you, in the case of these Conscientious Objectors, to arrest them and bring them before the Court, and impose fines, and, if the fines are not paid, proceed to imprison them? Is it really contemplated that now, when, for the first time, you are making military service compulsory on this country, it should be accompanied by the arrest and imprisonment of a certain number of men who unquestionably, by common consent, are men of the highest character, and, in other matters, good citizens? I am sure hon. members would not wish to contemplate that there should be anything in the nature of religious persecution, or that you should have this body of men locked up in the gaols of this country."

Acting in accordance with these understandings and on the terms of the Act, several Tribunals granted absolute exemption to Conscientious Objectors; but, unfortunately, the passing of the Act has been followed by numerous persecutions, threats, punishments, and imprisonments.

Many men—now numbering some hundreds—are still in prison, some of them having been sentenced to the ordeal of two years' hard labor. Numbers, after discharge, have been re-convicted (some as many as four times) for the same "offence," and this in spite of the assurance of Lord Sandhurst, who declared in the House of Lords last July that "if the man will not do national work, he will complete his sentence of civil imprisonment, and he will be discharged from the Army."

I doubt whether the country is aware of the type of men who are thus the victims of the bad faith of our rulers. I visited some of them last week at Wormwood Scrubs. I find they are put on a low diet, subjected to a great deal of solitary confinement, and forbidden to communicate with their friends for a period of eight weeks. And who are these men? One is a member of a well-known and highly respected family which has given many of its members to useful public service, and who himself voluntarily relinquished a large assured income in order to devote himself to philanthropic and religious work; another is a son of a late Member of Parliament, who, like his father before him, is highly respected by all who knew him as a man of sincerity of purpose and earnest dedication of life to the service of his fellow-men. A third was engaged at the time of his arrest on important work for the Parliamentary Reconstruction Committee. These men, and many scores of their fellow-prisoners, are members of the Society of Friends, and can claim several generations of Quaker ancestry. That the stand they are taking is prompted by the highest motives cannot be questioned by those who know them. Their manner of defence, too, speaks for itself. Thus one of them said before the Court-Martial:—

"It is hard for me to withhold any service, to disobey any orders, or to cause any trouble. But the spectacle before the world as I stand here to-day of two highly-civilized Christian nations straining every nerve in the effort to starve each other's women and children, to destroy the greatest possible proportion of each other's manhood, strengthens my confidence in the better way out of the world's trouble, and lays upon me afresh the duty of proclaiming it."

And another made the following statement:—

"My wish is to serve my fellows and to help to show that no man need fight or send another to fight. I know that the hope I have may take long to realize, and that the total disarmament of all nations may seem a dream. I am none the less certain that it can be made fact when men trust the good in each other rather than fear the evil; use love and goodwill to overwhelm fear and suspicion, and instead of taking arms to destroy the bodies of their fellow-men, rely on love which will destroy the evil in their minds and hearts."

I find it difficult to believe that any useful service is rendered by keeping such men as these in prison; and as Mr. Wilson said in his recent letter to you, such proceedings are certainly inconsistent with the public declaration of Ministers, as well as with the intentions of the Military Service Acts.—Yours, &c.,

M. P.

March 13th, 1917.

#### HOW BUSINESSES ARE RUINED.

SIR.—Your correspondent "Wayfarer" writes of the fresh dislocation of industry brought about by the new Government edicts, and the consequent injustice.

Unfortunately, there is nothing new about this. The war is responsible for so much injustice that one hesitates to speak of one's own misfortunes; but the case "Wayfarer" quotes tempts me to break silence.

Before the war my business was in a most efficient and progressive condition, employing over one thousand workpeople, and exporting goods to the value of one million per annum.

This export business was seriously crippled as soon as the war broke out, and owing to that and latterly to the suppression of the industry by the Ministry of Munitions on account of the shortage of raw materials, the plant has not worked on the average at more than *one-third* of its capacity since the war began. The works, which is one of the most modern and economical in the country, consisting of over eight acres of buildings, equipped throughout with electric cranes and power, and served by private sidings and canal, was offered to the Government in November, 1914, and to the Ministry of Munitions in June, 1915, for the purpose of shell manufacture, for which it is almost ideal, but each time the proprietors were told that it was not required. No effort of any kind was made to utilize the works in the national interest, or to put any other business in the way of the firm, in place of that which it was found necessary in the national interest to destroy, until October, 1916, when, after further representations, some little work was found for it, but at a price which cannot compensate for the suppression of its pre-war business. Meanwhile, expensive sites have been purchased and costly plants erected all over the country (some in the same township) without any previous inquiry into the resources of the neighborhood. Apparently certain individuals got jobs to erect new plants, and naturally did not want to know of existing plants. Thus we arrive at the policy of erecting State factories, which will be idle after the war or sold for much less than their cost, and the ruin of private establishments by closing down their business and drafting the men away under the Volunteer Service Acts to State factories.

One is willing to suffer a great deal for this war, but that is the kind of justice which makes one feel that when the war is over it would be wiser to transfer one's energies and experience to where they are likely to meet with fairer recognition.—Yours, &c.,

E. PETER JONES.

Mersey Ironworks, Ellesmere Port.  
March 12th, 1917.

#### THE POLICY OF THE YOUNGER LIBERALISM.

SIR.—Some little time ago you were attacked in the "Times" by a writer signing himself "Watchman," who by drubbing THE NATION hoped that he was hurting some of the political opponents he most disliked. The party truce simply means to the Northcliffe Press and their supporters attacking their opponents in the name of the Empire and forbidding them to reply in the name of the Allied cause. Some of the deductions that he drew from your articles—viz., that you favored the re-establishment of the Game Laws and the abolition of Labor representation, are either so maliciously unfair or pitifully stupid that they call for no reply, and I am troubling you with this letter not to point out this, but to agree heartily with that part of "Watchman's" letter in which he states that THE NATION has represented, and is representing, the feelings of the younger Liberalism. It is for this advocacy that we owe to you our thanks. The hope of this country for the future must rest to a large extent with the younger Radicals. The Labor Party, for the most part, and a great mass of Liberalism, have shown themselves deaf and dumb to the finer issues of Liberty, and have deserted the fundamentals of their respective creeds. The worst threat of the future is a great Bureaucratic party consisting of the least thoughtful elements of the old parties and supported by all the least worthy portions of the Press from the "Times" to "John Bull."

There is existing throughout this country at the present time a vast mass of opinion bitterly opposed to this formidable and recent growth of a demagogic bureaucracy, which has remained silent because it has thought that unity in face of a common foe is the paramount duty of these times; but many of us think that unless the spiritual victory is to rest unchallengably with Prussia, whatever the material results of the war may be, the time has come for the expression of that opinion. Perhaps I may be allowed to tabulate what, in my opinion, the principles are which at the present juncture of affairs must guide us Radicals of the younger school:—

(1) The eradication of the idea that this war is a sort of vulgar sporting fight. I admit this idea is probably only held and expressed by some of our more prominent politicians over military age.

(2) The eradication of the idea that this war is to proceed indefinitely, or that armies that were enlisted under the plea of the liberation of Belgium, the maintenance inviolate of the frontiers of France, and the preservation of liberty for small nationalities, shall be used merely for gaining territorial advantages, either for us or for our Allies.

(3) The eradication of the idea that the war of armaments is to be followed by a war of tariffs with its ensuing necessity of the permanent division of Europe into at least two hostile camps.

(4) The return of this country to a constitutional form of government, with the Executive directly responsible to the Legislature.



(5) As little interference as is possible with the liberty of the subject.

These are the chief of our present needs. The problems of the future, which can be solved only by proceeding from the same basis of reverence for liberty, are too important and too numerous to be even touched upon in this letter. I hope that in the future, as in the past, THE NATION will continue to advocate on every occasion these ideals, and I feel that the moment may be approaching when it might be necessary for some of us, no matter how few, to band ourselves together and to fight at by-elections or elsewhere, if necessary, for the victory of these principles, the destruction of which by our bureaucrats would be nearly as fatal to this country as their destruction by the arms of their far more efficient exponents, the Germans.—Yours, &c.,

LIBERAL PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE.

March 14th, 1917.

#### THE "KNOCK-OUT BLOW."

SIR,—The concluding sentences in the first paragraph of "Wayfarer's" Diary the other week are calculated, one might suppose, to strike a reflecting chill in the most fervent adherent of the "knock-out blow." But is there no alternative to meek resignation as the drama unfolds itself? Is it not time that we wrenched our minds away from contemplating the impolicy of the enemy, and concentrated them upon our policy and our intentions, forcing, by some combined effort on the part of moderate men, the country also to focus itself thereon?

Two and a-half years ago a free nation rushed to arms in defence of the weak and outraged. A conscripted nation refuses overtures of peace, and fights on to-day—for what? "For our lives?" The phrase once in favor, then dropped, is revived with the enemy's intensified submarine warfare. But, "for our lives," because of a proclaimed policy, the policy of the "knock-out blow" which, as recently defined, is interpreted by all sections of enemy opinion (moderate and extreme, reactionary and democratic) to purport the enemy's political, military, and economic annihilation.

Two months ago the enemy was far more concerned in saving his own life than in destroying ours. He proposed a Conference which should end the war. Why was it rejected? Because the enemy did not there and then disclose the terms he had instructed his delegates to lay upon the Conference table? But what did we risk in accepting the offer? To have done so committed us to nothing. If the enemy's terms were found to be dishonoring, our delegates left the Conference, and the Allied Governments faced their peoples with clear consciences. If the enemy's terms were reasonable and contained at least the basis for negotiation, Peace, the greatest of all gains, was in sight. Indeed, we stood to gain either way on the assumption—but only on the assumption—that we ourselves desired a reasonable settlement—i.e., a settlement arrived at by negotiation. But did we, and do we? And if not, who are the negative "we"? Our troops? None who speak with knowledge dare affirm it. The mass of our people? If moderate men of authority who in private conversation do not disguise their views, would conquer their apprehensiveness, rally all forces round the standard of reason, and display some of that civic leadership for which the country is waiting, placing the alternatives honestly before it, their doubts would speedily be removed. I speak, not without personal experience, of very numerous public meetings (never reported in the London Press, and seldom in the provincial) in industrial centres, meetings with unanimous audiences ranging up to 3,000.

The enemy obviously desired to negotiate. Governments that find themselves in that position have to take into account powerful extremist sections in their own country which are opposed to negotiation, and which might possibly succeed in wrecking their Governments if the latter disclosed, before the Conference, terms regarded by those sections as revealing infirmity of national purpose. None will deny that the first step towards peace is always hazardous for either belligerent: that he ventures much in taking it, something of pride, of prestige, something—it may be a good deal—from domestic attack. He is entitled to some latitude, and is better able to face internal criticism if the disclosure of his terms follows, and does not precede, the meeting of the Conference he has invited. After the Conference has begun its sittings, extreme sections are confronted with an accomplished fact.

The non-disclosure of terms is not necessarily indicative of insincerity (in this case the passionate desire for peace among the enemy peoples is acknowledged) on the part of the would-be negotiator. A statement of terms may preclude all possibility of negotiation. Can any man who is honest with himself declare that the Allies' terms coupled, as they must in honesty be coupled, with the resolutions of the Paris Conference and with separate declarations of intent by Allied rulers and statesmen, were terms which admitted, or were intended to admit of, negotiation? The reference to Turkey in the Allied Note cannot be read apart from the previous declaration of M. Trepoff\*

and the immediately preceding Imperial rescript specifically claiming a Russian annexation of Constantinople. The paragraph relating to the subjects of the Dual Monarchy cannot be considered aside from such official utterances as that of Signor Bissolati: "The Austrian Empire, as such, must cease to exist . . . and we will fight on until the Austrian Empire is dissolved." The reference to provinces formerly wrested from the Allies cannot be separated from Mr. Balfour's pointed allusion to Alsace-Lorraine which, as worded, postulates a repetition of the action of Louis XIV., and later of Prussia, in disposing of human beings without any test of their wishes. Nor can the absence of reference to Colonial conquests in the Note be regarded as of moment since Mr. Walter Long's positive affirmation, now nebulously winnowed in deference to neutral censure.

Above all, the resolutions of the Paris Conference stand; and unrepudiated, with the Allied Note and its implications and accessory declarations grafted thereon, can the declared policy of the Alliance be described as embodying "terms of Peace"? With the avowed policy of the Paris Conference in the background, but underlying the whole debate, the Allied Note is not a statement of terms of peace. It is a proclamation of terms of conquest. And it is a proclamation of terms of conquest which ordain the prolongation of Belgium's martyrdom. For a Belgium, independent, restored, with a secure future, is simply incompatible with the policy of the Paris Conference; just as a League of Nations is incompatible with it. The only Belgium which the policy of the Paris Conference permits of, is a Belgium industrially crippled by severance from the German markets, deprived, therefore, of real economic independence. Indeed, given the policy of the Paris Conference an operative factor in European politics, and it is hard to conceive of a Belgium not permanently garrisoned by French and British troops.

To what ends, then, do our policy and our intentions tend? To the promotion of the welfare of the people of these islands? But shall we not challenge the judgment which thus conceives it? Shall we continue to slide deeper and deeper into this horrible pit of error and not make a resolute endeavor to save ourselves? That is the heart of things. For what, for whom, are those who tell us we are fighting for our lives, vicariously sacrificing the youth of the nation? Is it to be a recompense to the survivors, a nebula of promise hovering over the babes of to-day as they lie in their cradles, that we succeed in effectively pursuing our hatreds into the counting house after the war, and impoverishing the working classes of Central Europe? Are the people of this country to be the happier, the better off, the more secure, if the Tsar takes Mass in St. Sophia, if Austria-Hungary is disrupted, if Russia extends her dominions west of the Carpathians?

Burke once wrote: "They that pay, feed, and equip, must direct." The people of this country are paying and equipping, at least. Are their rulers directing, or being directed? If directing, whither in the ultimate resort? If directed, wherefore? A million lives, it is freely said, are to be staked on this latest gamble in the West. Such a gamble is it known to be that the confident ministerial predictions of victory, made while the "Victory Loan" was being gathered in, are withdrawn as soon as they have served their purpose. And after this million of lives have been laid down—what then? We allow ourselves to be led blindly, through a mist of blood. But why do we? And how long shall we allow ourselves to be thus led in the delusion that patriotism demands unqualified endorsement of a policy which, as proclaimed, has become a policy of the "knock-out blow" in order to enforce terms of conquest from which the British people can reap no advantage but only added burdens, even if the pursuit thereof does not involve them in "disaster" which the very man who announced the "knock-out blow" to be the national purpose, now acknowledges as possible? †—Yours, &c.,

E. D. MOREL.

Cherry Croft, King's Langley, Herts.

#### THE NECESSITY FOR STATE PURCHASE.

SIR,—My friend, Mr. H. G. Chancellor, M.P., has rendered such conspicuous services to the Temperance Movement that any contribution to the controversy from his pen is entitled to the profoundest respect. Those who have studied his former deliverances on the subject in which he has so strongly emphasized the costliness of State Purchase and the contention that the Government will, under it, be compelled to keep up the revenue by pushing the sale of strong drink, will find those former deliverances very hard to reconcile with the last expression of his views, showing how great a revenue the State could make out of the manufacture of alcohol for industrial purposes.

Mr. Chancellor is now prepared to accept State Purchase if accompanied by "suppression"—presumably total and immediate suppression. The equities of the claim for compensation

\* Endorsed by the British Ambassador at Petrograd.

† House of Commons, February 23rd



are not affected by the fact that the suppression is total or immediate. State purchase would assuredly involve some measure of suppression—whatever the limit as to time or proportion—and even from his standpoint would, in the judgment of most, if not all, supporters of State Purchase, lead to a swifter and larger measure of suppression than any effort on his lines would be likely to achieve. With the elimination of the private pecuniary interest from the trade, and the destruction of the political power which goes along with it, would disappear the very "conditions" which insure "its continuance" in the form we know it, and "insure its permanence."

Each community which has adopted the State management of drink—Saskatchewan, South Carolina, and Russia, to wit—has not merely not checked, but powerfully stimulated, "the demand for the only settlement possible."

Put in a sentence, Mr. Chancellor would autocratically from above, not by the medium of any popular vote or reference, totally and instantly prohibit the sale of all intoxicants in the belief that when the war and demobilization were over, such universal prohibition would become permanent by general acquiescence.

Such a consummation is devoutly to be desired, but is there the remotest prospect of it? Personally, I think the case for war-time prohibition irresistible, and do my best to bring it about, but to use Mr. Chancellor's own words, "it is no use blinking awkward facts." The overwhelming masses of the adult and voting portion of the nation are wont to use ardent liquors as beverages. The present Liquor Control Board regulations are only submitted to—and that none too willingly—as temporary war necessities. It is unwise to draw the bridle of a high-spirited steed too tightly.

The British national drink is beer. The brewers for some generations, assisted by the best chemists in the country, have been trying to induce the consumption by the masses of a light and very slightly or absolutely non-intoxicating beer. Success in this would mean fortune for the manufacturers, and the liquor evil would be gone. The brewers have not been blind to this. The reply of the people to all experiments has been that they will not have a drink on which they can get "no forrarder."

All that Mr. Chancellor says so well about alcoholism can be urged in favor of State Purchase, which provides the most practical means of securing the smallest practicable consumption of intoxicants, but his roseate dream is as wide of the actualities of the case as it well could be. The difficulties which Mr. Chancellor so airily disposes of as matters for "adjustment" would become insuperable obstacles, covered by the impregnable entrenchments behind which the private profit trade fights.

It is high time that Temperance workers gave up chasing rainbows, and abandoning the quest of magnificent impossibilities concentrated on securing smaller probabilities. State Purchase could in case of need be made to give the country not only all the benefit of drink exclusion till peace be reached, but the priceless advantage of a great permanent forward advance in the fight against alcoholism, and that, too, by almost universal consent. State Purchase would give an assured prospect of a war-time prohibition both more easily accomplished and more easily enforced than would be possible without it. Some Temperance reformers find the enemy in the vested interests in the trade, and some in the strength of the general addiction to liquor; but the wise will make full allowance for both, realizing the force of their combination.

The greatest peril of the situation lies in two things. The first lies in now insisting upon an impossible permanent prohibition which would endanger the chance of any war-time prohibition; and the second consists in risking the opportunity for conserving the precious Temperance gains of the war period. A victorious peace has often carried with it a perilous menace to Temperance, and the private profit liquor interest will make the most of its opportunities. The times of reaction will bring a demand for the abolition of the beneficent war-time liquor restrictions, and the trade, pointing to its losses and privations on the altar of patriotism, will demand the fullest reimbursement. State Purchase, trusting the democracy and giving to the people themselves the right to work out their own salvation from the liquor evil, holds out the only solid hope of lasting and continuous advance.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT B. BATTY.

Hillside, Buxton. March 12th, 1917.

SIR,—I am glad the influence of THE NATION is being cast on the side of State Purchase of the Liquor Trade, and I have read your recent able article thereon and the subsequent correspondence with much interest. Sir J. Compton Rickett's disclaimer of his advocacy of the measure "for the sake of revenue" is welcome, as undoubtedly there has been some misunderstanding of his attitude in respect to that point. My adherence to purchase is based on the anticipation, not that it is going (directly) to help the revenue, but the exact opposite! I want to see the revenue from drink cut down year by year until it reaches the vanishing point (that such loss would be immense ultimate gain to the nation who can doubt?) and it is because I believe that purchase presents the shortest and surest

and, probably, the only way to such a consummation that I advocate it.

Our Temperance opponents appear not to realize that the trade possesses to-day a firmer grip on the nation (through the 1904 Act and the astuteness of the brewers, &c., in interesting the public in their business) than it had when the Temperance movement began more than two generations ago. How is this grip to be removed? So far as I can see, after very considerable experience in Temperance and licensing reform work, only by the State acquiring the whole trade in the national interest.

There is a point which I have not seen emphasized, but it is surely important—namely, that, given the best possible Licensing Reform measure (the Scottish Bill, or any other), and assuming the present drink system to remain unchanged, the trade, fighting for its life, would strive at every turn to hamper and prejudice the exercise of the people's will, which, with the elimination of private financial interest under State ownership, would be subjected to no such influence.

I would add that whilst I would welcome prohibition for the remainder of the war, I am even more concerned as to the situation thereafter. Are the coming days of peace to find us still under a system which, last year, in spite of shortened hours and the absence of vast numbers of men, drew more drink money from the people than ever before, or are we ere then to enter upon a great new departure which will at last and at once secure the submission of this hitherto insoluble problem to the nation's will?—Yours, &c.,

ALEX. GUTHRIE.

Heswall, Cheshire. March 12th, 1917.

#### THE IRISH PRISONERS.

SIR,—It is to be hoped that Countess Marciewicz will be allowed the same human intercourse as the other Irish prisoners now detained in this country in connection with the insurrection. The male prisoners, I understand, are permitted to meet each other for an hour a day—a wise admission that political prisoners belong to a special class. Countess Marciewicz, being confined in a gaol in which there are now no other Irish prisoners, ought surely to be allowed some equivalent privilege. She is, it appears, permitted to see a visitor once a fortnight. But this is hardly a fair equivalent for the daily hour of the men. Is there any real reason why the Home Office, having recognized the difference between political and other prisoners, should not concede a daily hour to Mme. Marciewicz as well? It seems only just to offer some such equivalent in her case.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT LYND.

Hampstead. March 12th, 1917.

### Poetry.

#### THE HAPPY FARMER.

(Virgil Georgics II. 513: in quantitative hexameters.)

BUT the honest farmer's curv'd plough hath seam'd his acre;  
Hence is a year's employ; hence country and son's little infants  
Keepeth he, hence his herds and loyal laboring oxen.  
Nor may he rest, but that with apples his season aboundeth,  
Or with youngling flocks, or cornsheaves etact for a harvest,  
Ev'ry furrow burden'd and granges fill'd to the bursting.  
Comes winter: Sicyon's kernels are squeez'd in a handmill,  
His merry swine come in acorn-cramm'd, in woods the berries fall,  
And manifold bounties doth the autumn yield him, as up there  
On sunny ledge yonder his vintage peacefully ripens.  
Meanwhile all for a kiss his sweet babes clamber about him;  
His household its chastity keeps; his cows with udders full  
Wait to be milkt, and plumply fatten'd kids in the paddock play  
As with opposing horn one butts a fellow petulantly.  
Hé observeth the old holidays, and stretch on a greensward,  
Where with a fire i' the midst his comrades crown the prepar'd  
bowl,

Pours for thee, Lenaëus, adrest, and under an elm-tree  
Sets his flockmasters some target there to be aim'd at,  
And they bare their hardy bodies for a country tripping-match.  
This life was the Sabines' in the old by-gone generation,  
This the Brother-Founders'; thus wax'd Etruria mighty,  
Aye, an' of all fair states fairest grew Rome to an empire,  
Her seven hills girdled with one wall circling about them.  
Ere ever in Crete's isle rose upstart Jupiter, and ere  
Ingratitude's children slaughter'd the cattle for a banquet,  
Kingly Saturn so liv'd in golden days upon our earth;  
Nor yet had ears hearken'd to the trump's loud alchemy,\* nor yet  
Had the hammer'd anvils 'neath sword-blades' forgery sounded.

C. W. BRODRIBB.

\* "Sounding alchemy," Milton, P.L., 2,517.

## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy." By A. Seth Pringle-Pattison. (Clarendon Press. 12s. 6d. net.)  
 "Letters of Richard Watson Gilder." Edited by Rosamond Gilder. (Constable. 14s. net.)  
 "Science and the Nation: Essays by Cambridge Graduates." Edited by A. C. Seward. (Cambridge University Press. 5s. net.)  
 "Behind the German Veil." By J. M. de Beaufort. (Hutchinson. 6s. net.)  
 "The Snare." By Rafael Sabatini. (Secker. 5s. net.)

Do bookish people write the best books? This question was suggested to me by an announcement that an American writer is at work on a new *Life of Southey*. For Southey was one of the most bookish men that ever lived. "He was never happy," said Rogers, "except when making or reading a book." And Byron pronounced him to be "the only existing entire man of letters. All the others have some pursuit annexed to their authorship." His talk, according to De Quincey, ran too much upon literature and too little upon life, and his literary productions included epics, ballads, lyrical poems, tragedies, histories, fairy-tales, essays, and translations. "I had rather leave off eating than poetizing," he told a friend, and, while still a young man, he regretfully wrote: "What a pity that I should not execute my intention of writing more verses than Lope de Vega, more tragedies than Dryden, and more epic poems than Blackmore!" This is an appalling aspiration, but it proves that Southey was the most complete type of the man of letters by profession. In his own opinion, he sacrificed his prospects of wealth and rank to "one overwhelming propensity," and he adds that that propensity "has made me happy, and will make me immortal." The best comment on this confident ambition is the fact that Professor Saintsbury can to-day point to the absence of even an attempt at a complete edition of Southey's works as "the chief instance of a scandal that too often affects English, as compared with foreign, literature."

BUT to return to the question with which I began. "The reason," says Bagehot, "why so few good books are written, is that so few people that can write know anything." They spend their lives in their studies, are acquainted with the style and sentiments of the best authors, but have never learned to use their own eyes and ears. And he points to Southey as the supreme example of this:—

"The mental habits of Robert Southey, which about a year ago were so extensively praised in the public journals, are the type of literary existence, just as the praise bestowed on them shows the admiration excited by them among literary people. He wrote poetry (as if anybody could) before breakfast; he read during breakfast. He wrote history until dinner; he corrected proof-sheets between dinner and tea; he wrote an essay for the 'Quarterly' afterwards; and after supper, by way of relaxation, composed the 'Doctor'—a lengthy and elaborate jest. Now, what can one think of such a life—except how clearly it shows that the habits best suited for communicating information, formed with the best care, and daily regulated by the best motives, are exactly the habits which are likely to afford a man the least information to communicate?"

THIS is an effective statement of the case against men of letters by profession. And Bagehot's friend, R. H. Hutton, went so far as to maintain that the absence of a general love of literature in the English people is the reason why our literature is so great as it is. To support this paradox, Hutton drew a comparison between us and our present enemies. The Germans, the most bookish people in the world, compile magnificent encyclopædias, and write learned disquisitions and scientific treatises, and "their revisions, which they characteristically call 'bearborings' (*Bearbeitungen*), of former works, betray not only their extraordinary fidelity of diligence, but their immense humility." Yet German literature cannot compare with English. And the reason, according to Hutton, "is simply this, that a bookish people cannot produce the greatest books, if we mean by the greatest books something more than monuments of investiga-

tion or learning." From this it is but a short step to the conclusion that "the men who will make the great popular books of the world, the books which dominate the unbookish, will always be fed chiefly on first-hand experience of men and things, and only by accident, as it were, on literary studies."

BOTH Bagehot and Hutton were themselves professional men of letters, and it seems to me that they were rather too sweeping in condemning their own order. If we think of the men who have produced the world's literary masterpieces, we shall find that a fair proportion occupied themselves at least as much with literature as with life. Nobody would call Shakespeare a bookish man, but nobody would deny that Milton lived on books, and drew from them more inspiration than from any first-hand experience of men and things. Goethe, too, had an essentially bookish mind. Scott was nothing if not a student, and Byron must have spent a large part of his life in reading. If anybody doubts it, let him look through the list of books that Byron read, to be found in the index to Mr. Rowland Prothero's edition of his works. Montaigne and Bacon were both book-men, yet Montaigne and Bacon are two of the authors who most appeal to people who accept the view put forward by Bagehot and Hutton. In fact, nearly all the men who have left their mark upon literature lived a great deal among books. Dryden, Pope, Coleridge, Shelley, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, were all in some degree poets of the desk. And what would be left of Gibbon, Johnson, Carlyle, or Macaulay if we left out all that they got from books, or even if we left out all of their writing that is not directly concerned with books? Perhaps Dickens is the only great modern writer who owed less to books than to direct experience of life.

VERY often the explanation of this depreciation of the professional man of letters is a feeling of something like contempt for those who are the recipients and the transmitters of knowledge rather than the originators of it. Yet such persons are not wholly contemptible. A man who lives by his pen, as Sir Leslie Stephen put it, "confesses himself to belong to a lower class of humanity; but he may be a good specimen of his class, as a cab-horse may be a good cab-horse though he does not expect to win the Derby." Southey, at any rate, never had a doubt that the career he chose was a useful one, but, then, Southey believed himself to be a master of literature. When a friend told him that "*Madoc*" was the best English poem that had left the press since "*Paradise Lost*," Southey's comment was "indeed this is not exaggerated praise, for unfortunately there is no competition." He never had a doubt that posterity would proclaim him a great poet, and he wrote for posterity because he was convinced that he could only win contemporary popularity by compliance with the faults of the time, and this he refused to do. "Unfortunately," to quote Sir Leslie Stephen again, "there are other roads to unpopularity besides simple excellence," and time, so far from changing, has but confirmed the judgment of Southey's contemporaries.

BYRON, who loathed Southey, admitted that his prose is "perfect"; and except for a few short pieces, it is for his prose that he is remembered to-day. Even here, his more ambitious works, such as his "*History of Brazil*" and "*History of the Peninsular War*," are gathering dust on the shelves of libraries, and he lives because of a couple of minor efforts—his biographies of Nelson and John Wesley. Both are admitted masterpieces, and it is worth remarking that neither could have been written except by the method to which Bagehot and Hutton were so opposed. The thing to be regretted about Southey is not so much that he devoted his life to books, as that he devoted so much of it to the wrong kind of books. We would be glad to exchange his lengthy histories for the short biographies of George Fox and Warren Hastings that he intended to write, and for which he spent much time in collecting materials. As it is, we ought to be grateful for what we have, and bookish persons, at any rate, will get a good deal of entertainment from the six volumes of his "*Life*" and the four volumes of his "*Letters*" which can be got at small expense from the second-hand bookshops.

PENGUIN.





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## Reviews.

## HAS HERBERT SPENCER REALLY TRIUMPHED?

"Herbert Spencer." By HUGH ELLIOT. (Constable. 6s. net.)

IN a way, Mr. Havelock Ellis's celebration of "The Triumph of Herbert Spencer" is very pleasant to me. As a Socialist, I have been in full reaction against Herbert Spencer's senile politics (not those of his prime) for nearly forty years; and I see in the experience of the war, not their triumph, but the *coup de grâce* that puts them out of their lingering pain. But I have always been revolted by that mean belittlement of the hero which in our unmannerly community is the received method of questioning his influence. Herbert Spencer quite naturally and unaffectedly lived the life of a great man, and played the great game all through; and whoever does not see this and take off his hat to him, does not know a gentleman when he meets one. When Mr. Havelock Ellis faces an ungrateful and ungenerous posterity, and calls for three cheers for Herbert Spencer, I cannot believe that any decent soul will refuse to hail his name with three times three if he really knows what Spencer did and how much the world owed to it in his time. Even those who take no interest in his philosophy will feel a quaint affection for the man who, when he was not faithfully straightening out the tangled thought of his century, was inspiring himself with Meyerbeer's music; giving up his horse because, on its discovery of his intense dislike to coerce any living creature, it went slower than he walked, and finally grazed by the roadside without respect for the philosopher's pressing appointments; refusing the proffered affection of George Eliot because she was not as beautiful as the Venus of Milo; and, when his landlady objected to his describing her in the census paper as "the lady with whom Mr. Herbert Spencer lives," pondered on her unaccountable recalcitrance for an hour, and then altered the entry to "the lady who lives with Mr. Herbert Spencer." Speculative criticism may yet conjecture that he must have been the original of Wagner's Parsifal, "*der reine Thor durch Mitleid wissend*." All the horses in paradise are probably now struggling for the honor of carrying him at full gallop to whatever destination he may be seeking uncoercively.

Mr. Havelock Ellis inevitably salutes him as "the essential Englishman, pure and unmitigated, the complete middle-class Englishman of the straitest sect, the naked, typical Englishman." That is what we always say of a man who disagrees with his contemporaries on every subject on which it is possible for a man to disagree with the majority without being stark mad, and who would have been lynched if the common Englishman of his day had been intelligent or erudite enough to find out what he really believed and disbelieved—especially what he disbelieved. It is like saying that St. Sophia's is a typical church. Mr. Havelock Ellis offers as evidence the fact that Spencer was a member of the committee of the Athenæum Club, which is hardly a general English characteristic, and that he did not know German, in which respect he might be described as a typical Chinaman. I am afraid the statement that Spencer was a typical Englishman will not wash. But it may be said fairly and significantly that he was one of those men of whom Englishmen say that he was typically English: a thing they never say of Shelley. And when the proposition is narrowed down to his being a typical middle-class Englishman, it may be interpreted as meaning that as he had never been broken in to communal life either by slavery, by graduation at a university, by State service, or by belonging to a social circle so exclusive that everybody in it is supposed to know everybody else, he was an inveterate anarchist. Being also a man of vigorous mind, a freethinker in the best sense, he was, within the limits imposed by his humanity and common sense, a great Anti, or Conscientious Objector.

Mr. Havelock Ellis says that "the war has put the final seal on Herbert Spencerism." But I have heard another man say that the war has put the kybosh on Herbert Spencer. I cannot find the word "kybosh" in the dictionary: it may be Hebrew for the final seal, for all I know. Perhaps the editor will invite philologists to open a correspondence on the subject. But I think the gentleman I have just quoted meant that the war had made Spencer's Unsocialism

ridiculous. And the only demurrer that can be put in is that war is not a fair test of anything. You cannot reasonably say that war has put the kybosh on domestic architecture or on cities that do not see the sky through steel nets, merely because our houses will not resist the impact of nine-inch shells, and the atmosphere is not proof against the droppings from Zeppelins. I should admit that if Spencerism had made good in peace, it could not be discredited because it had broken down with a crash in war. But the truth is that Spencerism was such a disastrous failure in peace that war actually produced comparative prosperity and social sanity by a better distribution of wealth and a more patriotic employment of men. The fact that the evils of Unsocialism had created vested interests in waste, in poverty, in dishonesty, in drunkenness, in prostitution, in incompetence, snobbery, and imposture, so huge that they resisted everything short of Armageddon, may be the explanation of Armageddon; but it is no justification of Unsocialism, and no triumph for the philosopher who opposed both Socialism and Militarism.

The mischief of the present situation is that we have been too lazy to accept the teachings either of the Socialists or of Herbert Spencer and his disciple, Hilaire Belloc. From Turgot and Adam Smith to Cobden, Bastiat, and Herbert Spencer, economists and philosophers have preached freedom of contract and of everything else; and from Robert Owen and Fourier to Morris and the Sidney Webbs, they have preached the common rule, the collective bargain, the communal life, and the doctrine that Robinson Crusoe, monarch of all he surveys, is far more a slave than the man who carries the weight of a thousand laws and works for something bigger than himself. But, bless you! the British people have not taken the slightest notice of these intellectual and imaginative exercises. When the slaughter of children's bodies and souls in the cotton factories became unbearable, they drifted into sham factory legislation for fifty years, and then, all the shams being exposed, made the legislation real. They drifted into Free Trade because there was money in it; and when, later on, the Midlands concluded that there was money for them in Protection and tried to revive it under the title of Tariff Reform, the ensuing debates proved nothing except that our political Free Traders did not know the A B C of Free Trade. We have drifted down stream in the current, and up stream in the eddy, without the least notion whither we are going. No statesman has lost a vote by talking the crassest Little Englandism to the working classes, and the crudest bellicose Imperialism to the non-working classes, in the same breath.

Things came to a pitch at last at which the governing classes found the British people out as the helpless drudges they are, and the British people found the governing classes out as the voluptuous and amiably incapable ignoramuses they are. What is more, both sides found themselves out at the same moment. Thus, bereft of the reciprocal idolatry which both of them once tried to live up to, they fell into mere cynical opportunism, neither knowing nor caring whether the particular measure at which they happened to be snatching or railing was Socialism or Unsocialism, or what deluge it might bring down or stave off next year. In those days statesmen committed themselves to gigantic wars, and lied about them instead of preparing for them, lest they should split their half-Pacifist party. When the war came, they amused the people by discussing the colossal indemnities they intended to exact from the Powers before whose troops their own were in headlong flight; and these same Powers, who had been terrifying the world (to their own undoing) for years by their boasts of an irresistibly perfect military organization and devotion to the State, were unable to follow up their outnumbered and half-equipped foes because their military nonpareils proved to be tacticians of the school of Offenbach's General Boum, and tried to reduce fortresses without siege guns, and to dash to Paris without provisions. The really big part of the business of government, both in Germany and England, has been too silly for words. To suggest, even in an epithalamium, that the crash in which it has ended has any reference to political science or philosophy, or can be either a triumph or a defeat for anybody who ever gave five minutes' thought to its problems, is to become an accomplice in the welter of humbug and intellectual confusion in which great names are current only as advertisements for the party intrigues of commonplace men.

The mess we are in just now is due to the fact that, though war on the present scale promptly reduces private capitalism and *laissez-faire* to absurdity, it cannot improvise the trained public service required by Socialism. Mr. Lloyd George's attempt to repeat Cromwell's Reign of the Saints with a Reign of Practical Business Men provokes Mr. Gilbert Chesterton's scepticism as to its underlying theory that, as he concisely puts it, "every man who desires to make a great deal out of the community will also ardently desire the community to make a great deal out of him." Mr. Chesterton might have gone further, and pointed out that even if the war has saved the souls of the great exploiters, and made them genuinely anxious to do the very reverse of what they have made their fortunes by doing, they are still much less qualified to begin than the novices who have nothing to unlearn, or even than the old bureaucracy, which has, at least, the tradition of public service. What has already actually happened is that they have begun doing the thing they are accustomed to do and know how to do, like the acrobat who became a monk, and, finding himself too illiterate to pray to the Blessed Virgin, turned double somersaults on the steps of her altar. Our Lady, no doubt, took the will for the deed, being in no very pressing need of a few extra prayers; but we shall not beat the Germans on the strength of the well-intended somersaults of our ex-provision merchants, railway directors, and family solicitors. Cromwell's experiment ended in a dictatorship and government by major-generals. Fortunately for himself, Cromwell was equal to the job, which was then a comparatively small one. It is now enormously bigger and more complex. Thus, Mr. Lloyd George has, in fact, backed himself to have an enormously bigger and more complex brain than Cromwell.

Also, it is to be observed that the powers he wields are stupendously more dangerous and destructive than any within Cromwell's reach. Shakespeare warned us that

"Could great men thunder  
As God Himself does, God would ne'er be quiet;  
For every pelting petty officer  
Would use his heaven for thunder, nothing but thunder."

Well, Mr. Lloyd George, like the Kaiser, can thunder, and worse. No calamity yet attributed to God has laid the earth waste, and strewn it with mangled and poisoned and strangled men as the policies of modern statesmen have laid waste our battle fronts. No natural famine and pestilence in civilized Europe has left behind it a region as vast as Poland drily reporting that in all its borders no child under seven is left alive. Lucky had it been for the inhabitants of these desolate places had our pelting petty officers wielded "nothing but thunder." Heroic, indeed, must be the confidence of Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Northcliffe and the Practical Men of Business, who are prepared to handle these plagues and save their country and everybody else's country without knowing what Herbert Spencer knew, by their mother wit alone. And they had better be as good as their word; for such is the nature of these plagues that if you do not handle them pretty masterfully, they tear you to pieces. Any fool can set them raging; but it takes a very considerable statesman to control and finally stop them.

The Ottoman Empire, in the days of its glory, recognized this, and did not trust to casual commercialists turning their hands to keeping an empire on the strength of having spent their prime in keeping a shop. It deliberately selected the most promising Christian children, and educated and trained them as a governing caste. Thereby it procured an Imperial service which enabled it for centuries to walk over its less thoughtful neighbors as a tank walks over a machine gun. There was no resisting it until this Imperial service, corrupted by its own power, connived at its own corruption, and became the sham that made Turkey the Sick Man of Europe. It is the inevitability of this corruption, in civilizations otherwise commercial, that has produced democracy, which begins as a sham, and ends (let us hope) as a reality, instead of beginning, like the Ottoman Empire and the feudal system, as a reality, and ending as a sham.

The peril of the present juncture is that we are at the sham end of feudalism and the sham beginning of democracy, each baffling and muddling the other, and neither having any real grasp of the situation. The Kaiser's nobles have no more real statesmanship than our own upstarts. They are all empirics attacking symptoms, and incapable of discovering or contriving causes. A statesman should be able

to produce a result at ten removes: the rulers of Europe cannot do it at one, and are tumbling back helplessly into every exploded crudity, like mutineers who throw the captain overboard, because they think that the art of navigation is only his tyranny.

Just as literature is produced by teaching everyone to read and write, and letting who can produce "Hamlet" and "Prometheus Unbound," so democracy must be produced by giving everyone a careful political education, and letting who can govern by consent. At present our most carefully educated people know the difference (until they forget it) between a spondee and a dactyl, and do not know the difference between a trade unionist and a Thug. We cover up the deplorable result by an idolatry of the voter more impudent than any idolatry of kings and icons has ever been, and call it democracy. We cling to property and Unsociatism until nine-tenths of the people have no property and are not "in Society"; and when we try Socialism, we are so ignorant of how to do it that we throw our liberties after our property, guaranteeing the dividends of our remaining proprietors, and making ourselves the slaves of their agents, the employers. Naturally, the ghost of Herbert Spencer rises and points to the title of his old pamphlet on "The Coming Slavery"; and Mr. Belloc says, "I told you so."

But that does not help very much. We have held it happier to be thriftless and imprudent, and to enjoy ourselves with the Bing Boys. And, whatever the British journalists and tub-thumpers who have never been in Germany may pretend, the Germans have been more thoroughly, scientifically, and beerily pleasure-loving and Bing-boyish than we. So let us drop all this nonsense about the triumph of the philosophers, and set to work cheerfully to muddle out as we muddled in, like jolly Britons with an ingrained contempt for spoilsports like Herbert Spencer. We have chucked Mr. Asquith and Viscount Grey because, having got us into this mess, it became clear that they could not get us out of it. And as it is thus made sufficiently probable that Mr. Lloyd George will be chucked also if he cannot get us out of it, we may as well give him a sporting chance, and let him rip. I use the language appropriate to the nature of the case.

G. B. S.

#### A MISCELLANY.

"Some Imagist Poets: An Annual Anthology." (Constable. 2s. 6d. net.)

"Ballads and Carols." By R. L. GALES. (Simpkin, Marshall. 3s. 6d. net.)

"The Æneid of Virgil: Books I.-III." Translated by A. S. WAY. (Macmillan. 3s. 6d. net.)

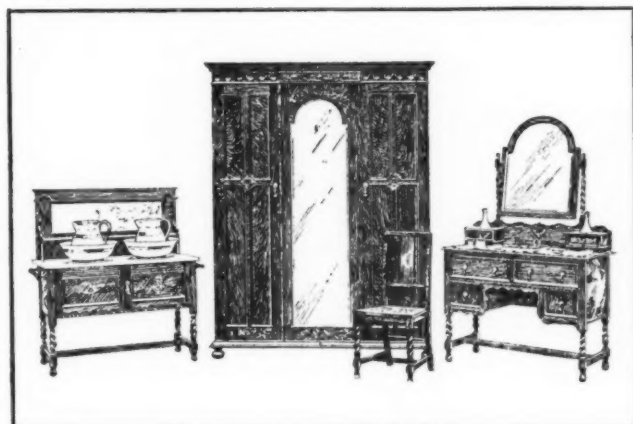
"The Song of Sharnuk." By WALLACE BERTRAM NICHOLS. (Erskine Macdonald. 1s. net.)

HERE we have another Imagist ultimatum, another drafting of policy, another Declaration of Independence, another advertisement of accession. "Imagism does not mean merely the presentation of pictures"—but "refers to the manner of presentation." It means a clear presentation of whatever the author wishes to convey. But, apparently, "the author" has only one kind of thing to present—"a mood of indecision," "the shifting and changing lights of a landscape," "the varying attitudes of mind of a person under strong emotion." We wonder what he does when it comes to stability, uniformity, or decision. Then a reaffirmation of individualism, liberty in art, and abandonment of existing forms, followed by the claim to be judged by different standards "from those employed in nineteenth-century art." All art is an attempt to express the feelings of the artist, and different nations have different metres and idioms. Then a definition of free verse as "a verse form based upon cadence" (which is something definite at last). Follows a long illustration about running round a circle, the relevance of which we confess we do not understand. Then the curious statement that "poetry is a spoken, not a written art." The repudiation of novelty is sensible; evidently the Imagists are waking up to the fact that you do not judge a work of art by your recognition that you have never seen anything like it before. Then the old argument repeated that "there is no hard-and-fast dividing line between prose and poetry." And, lastly, the request to be judged "by our own standards, not by those which have governed other men at other times."



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All this is as equivocal as a declaration of Peace Terms. "A clear presentation of whatever the author wishes to convey," for instance, applies to all expression, from Dumb Crambo to the epic. This truism is followed by a series of totally false statements. "All art" is not "an attempt to express the feelings of the artist"; even the lyric is by no means always subjective, or even at its best when subjective. That poetry is a spoken art needs no contradiction. Since the days of the oral ballad (regular, of course, in metre), it never has been, and, until we become primitives again and forget how to write or paint, it never will be. The same with the fallacy that there is no dividing line between prose and poetry. Different laws govern each medium of expression, and though the one art may borrow from the other and absorb its borrowings, that is a very different matter from a mere hybrid confusion. But all the dogmas in the world won't do the Imagists any good if they are only to be judged by their own standards. What a preposterous claim! Are there no universal, no objective, standards in poetry? Are these Olympians to be free from the tests and valuations we apply to Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and Browning? Are they to be their own arbiters? Because they invent a shibboleth called "Imagism," discard the discipline of metre and numbers in the twentieth century? Tush! as Mr. Shaw would say.

These gestures of revolt, this self-conscious, self-advertized rebelliousness, are not doing the Imagists any good. In the first place, we expect such a great deal of them, in consequence. In the second place, they will confuse convention with order, orthodoxy with law; and in the third, they become so obsessed with manner in "presentation," that they end by making a conscious tyranny of mannerism. That, from the doctrinal point of view, is what condemns the Imagists. Their fault is not a lack of, but an excess of, technique. "Formlessness" (in the restricted sense) has been the common accusation against them. Not a bit of it; it is a preoccupation, ousting proportion, with technicalities. Some random selections of Mr. Aldington's "Sunsets":—

"The white body of the evening  
Is torn into scarlet,  
Slashed and gouged and seared  
Into crimson,  
And hung ironically  
With garlands of mist.  
And the wind  
Blowing over London from Flanders  
Has a bitter taste."

Miss Amy Lowell (who writes half her poems in plain purple prose):—

"Thin-voiced nasal pipes  
Drawing sound out and out  
Until it is a screeching thread,  
Sharp and cutting, sharp and cutting,  
It hurts,  
Whee-e-e!  
Bump! Bump! Tong-ti-bump!  
There are drums here  
Baying,  
And wooden shoes beating the round, grey stones of the  
market-place.  
Whee-e-e!"

It is all very well for the Imagists to talk about the "strophe unit" and the "cadence"; but where is the inspiration to shape them? Mr. Lawrence is by far the best of these poets, and through him we do see what Imagism can do and what it cannot:—

"Out of blood rise up new ghosts,  
Grey, stern, angry, unsatisfied.

The more we slay and are slain, the more we raise up new  
ghosts against us."

Like realism, it can take an impression of restlessness, turmoil, and distraction; it can hold up a mirror to them. But that is not art, which turns its raw material into something different. There is, indeed, a place for Imagism—not the highest, but still a place. But its security is not the better guaranteed, by making such a prodigious fuss about it.

It would not be true to say that Mr. Gales has quite recaptured and reincarnated the spirit of the old carol and folk-song. But his metrical felicity, his spontaneity and transparent sincerity have done all that a modern could do towards it:—

"The minstrels make no mirth,  
Shepherds and vine-dressers flee,  
Desolate lies the earth,  
There are no sails on the sea,

The earth is in pains with the birth  
Of bitterest things to be.

But all thro' the dark, the heavy dark,  
The deathly dark of night  
Diluculum, diluculum,  
Dear dawn of our Delight."

Not great or even fine poetry, but surely as crisp and tender as watercress.

Mr. Way is a scholar; but he is also a man of letters, and it is the match between the two which has given him his deservedly high reputation as a translator of the classical poets. Until the whole of the *Æneid* is before us, or at least ten books of it, it is a little early to judge of the general effect. Vigor and precision (not only to the idiom of the original but to that of the English language) are the twin virtues of his expression. He does recognize, in fact, what the average run of translators do not, that the claims of one's own language precede those of the language rendered into it. Otherwise, the translation may as well be a "crib."

Here is a passage from the latter half of the third book:—

"'Tis a haven by winds unruffled and spacious, if that were all,—  
But hard by Etna thunders, his cataract fires appal.  
Now is he belching a black cloud skyward, a pitchy swirl  
Of smoke and of red-glowing ashes; upward now doth he hurl  
White globes of his flame which licketh the stars with its  
flickering tongue;  
Great ways are upbelched, the mountain's bowels outstretched  
and flung  
Heavenward, and molten rocks are upwhirled in serpent coils  
With root on root, while his flaming abyss like a caldron boils.  
Enceladus' lightning and blasted form, saith a legend wild,  
Lies crushed underneath this mountain mass, and above him  
piled  
Huge Etna out of his drifted furnaces breatheth flame."

It hardly carries Virgil's smoothness, but it is weighty and (particularly in the use of the old fourteeners of Chapman's for the *Iliad*) has a fine epic resonance and dignity.

Mr. Nichols's semi-allegorical poem of war is certainly too long, over-rhetorical, uneven, and tumid. But his vocabulary (an excellently copious one) is not altogether his master. If he does not yet know quite how to use it, his energy has the courage to grapple with it, and a maturer, more chastened muse, will, we hope, one day get the better of it.

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"He feedeth



the hungry."

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## The Week in the City.

MONEY has been abundant during the week, and advances overnight have been as low as 3 per cent. The tendency of discount rates has also been towards lower levels. There is a good deal of interest in the Stock Exchange in the elections for the new Committee, more especially in Mr. Birch Crisp's candidature, as he is known to be a man of independent ideas. Gilt-edged stocks, including Consols, have been rising, and on Wednesday the Chinese 1913 Loan advanced to 77½. There is a good deal of speculation as to the duration of the war, and some are beginning to hope for an early settlement in view of the military successes, and also of the pressure of famine. On the whole, the Stock Markets have been stagnant but firm since the flotation of the great War Loan. The weakness of Italian exchange is held to indicate economical difficulties in Italy, which have unfortunately been increased by the want of export facilities. Russian securities are neglected, but there are signs of a movement among City men for encouraging exports of British capital to Russia after the war. The Foreign Bondholders' Report shows that Ecuador, Paraguay, Nicaragua, and various Brazilian States, are in default. Peruvian securities suffered this week from reports of a revolution in that country.

### THE JAPANESE DEBT

Japanese bonds were little affected on the Stock Exchange by the announcement of further purchases of bonds on behalf of the Imperial Japanese Government by the Yokohama Specie Bank Ltd., chiefly because so much in the way of redemption has been going on during the past eighteen months. The following table shows the position of the two series of Four-and-a-half per cents.

Description.	Original Issue.	Amount Unred'd. End of 1915.	Amount Unred'd. End of 1916.	Present Amount Unred'd.
Japanese 4½ % 1905...	£ 30,000,000	£ 28,250,000	£ 25,245,500	£ 24,395,500
Ditto, 2nd Series ...	£ 30,000,000	£ 28,250,000	£ 24,982,980	£ 24,332,980

During 1916 no less than £6,271,500 was paid off—£3,004,500 of the first, and £3,267,020 of the second series. Already £1,500,000 has been paid off in 1917, in three portions of £500,000 in the weeks ended January 13th, March 3rd, and March 17th. The latest purchase is of £300,000 of the first, and £200,000 of the second series. Both series are quoted at 91½, at which the yield, allowing for redemption in 1925, works out at 5½ per cent.

### NEWCASTLE ELECTRIC SUPPLY.

The great industrial activity of the North is clearly reflected in the profits of the Newcastle Electric Supply Company, which have gone ahead in a remarkable way since the beginning of the war. Prior to 1908, the Company regularly paid an 8 per cent. dividend, but then fell on leaner times, and it was only in 1914 that its fortunes began to revive. The following table shows how profits have increased since 1913:—

	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.
Gross Profit ...	£ 187,000	£ 216,400	£ 237,100	£ 255,700
Net Revenue ...	£ 134,100	£ 156,500	£ 182,100	£ 195,700
Interest ...	£ 42,600	£ 52,600	£ 58,700	£ 60,600
Depreciation, &c. ...	£ 25,000	£ 37,000	£ 53,000	£ 60,000
Dividends ...	£ 73,700	£ 89,500	£ 93,500	£ 101,500
Rate on Ordinary ...	5½ %	5½ %	6 %	7 %

Expenses in 1916 rose by over £5,000, but the ratio of net revenue to capital invested rose from 6.4 to 6.9 per cent. Interest was slightly higher owing to an increase of £2,000 in the amount of debenture stock outstanding. The reserve fund is credited with £30,000, and £30,000 is put to reserve for depreciation, while the ordinary dividend is raised from 6 to 7 per cent., the balance carried forward being increased by £2,244. The directors propose an exchange of shares with the Cleveland and Durham Electric Power Company, thereby acquiring the shares and funded preference income stock of that company.

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